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Sure-Footing IN CHRISTIANITY EXAMINED.

BY

GEORGE HUGHES,

Late Minister of the Gospel at *Plymouth* in *Devon*.

The Testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple, Psal. 19. 7.

My Foot standeth in an even place: In the Congregations will I bless the Lord, Psal. 26. 12.

Ye are built upon the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief Corner-Stone, Ephes. 2. 20.

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A Minister of the Gospel in Plymouth.

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TO THE

Moſt Ingenious and Ingenuous

GENTRY,

IN THE

Kingdome of *ENGLAND*

Who ſeriouſly mind

ETERNITY.

Gentlemen,

I Hope the diſcriminating Character of the *Men* to whom I make this *Addreſs* can juſtly offend none. I would pray that all the Gentry in this Nation were ſuch and more than ſuch; even *ſublimely and powerfully Chriſtian, Spiritual and Holy:* But to entitle all to be ſo *Noble*, would be accounted a *Reproach* by multitudes of them who call themſelves Gentlemen. I will not therefore in the leaſt aſperſe them by intereſting them in this Concernment of Religion. My deſign only is to engage pregnant wits, and ſerious ſpirits in

matters of *Nature* and *Grace* to a due consideration of the *Examen* of a Discourse styled *Sure-Footing in Christianity*, and after all weighed to give their *discretive Judgments* as becomes men loving the *Truth*.

The Reason why I direct this work unto you, is because I do see the *Discourser* boasting, *that it was to his exceeding satisfaction to understand, that multitudes of the most Eminent, solid, and ingenuous wits of our Nation, had been diligent perusers of this Book.* You then are the precious souls, after which he hunts to catch by his *Discourses*, not to save but to destroy you: It will therefore be no way injurious to you, nor uncivil for a poor *Country-Fellow* to *Item* you, to look about you; for there are *snares* laid for your souls. I confess *Sure-Footing in Christianity* is such a *lovely Title* to a Book, that it would allure any Serious Christian to hunger after it and peruse it: I could not choose but long to see it when first I heard of it; having a desire to be sure of heaven. But best *Names* and *Titles* may be prefixed to the worst Authors and Books;

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as this will be found by an intelligent, piercing, Christian Reader. I shall not prejudge, but having perus'd the whole with as much diligence, as I can, I shall offer unto you *the most eminent, Solid, Ingenuous, and Christian wits*, these Animadversions to be weighed thereupon.

1. As to the Title I offer unto your observation, whether any or all his *Discourses* do answer it or make it good, that he hath discovered *A sure-Footing in Christianity*; when the very *Church and Religion* for which he contends, are yet under dispute among many, whether they be *Christian* or *Antichristian*? Can he give us *Sure-footing* in disputable matters? Again, what greater lubricity or slipperiness can there be, than in *Common voluntary-talk* from Fathers to Sons, which is his *Oral-tradition* of doctrine? unless there be a *standing-written Record* by which their reports may be tried? Yet herein is the *surest ground* he gives us to stand upon. It is my happiness in some kind that I know not the Man; therefore I can have no personal grudge, nor disrespect unto

him nor quarrel with him: but as he is intereſted in a cauſe contradictory to the Goſpel of Chriſt, and ſure way unto ſalvation. And herein I profeſs my ſelf an *Adverſary* to his *Sure-footing*; yet ſo far as to ſhew him where he may ſet his Foot ſurer for Heaven. For indeed his Title ſeems to me to be given from the reaſon of Contraries, as *Mountains* are ſaid *to be from moving, becauſe they move not at all*; ſo may his *Book* be ſtyled; *Sure-footing in Chriſtianity*, becauſe it giveth none at all; but rather ſets men on ſlippery places whence they eaſily ſlide, and fall into perdition: as is diſcovered in the Examination of it. As his work is entitled *Sure-footing*, ſo may he as *Author*, thence bear the Denomination of *Sure-foot*, or *Sure-footer*: Or as a *Country man* of ours tranſlates the name of one of *Actæons Dogs*, *Sure-tracer*; For having metamorphoſ'd Chriſt into the ſhape of a ſtrange *Roman Beaſt*, pretending him, he makes a loud cry to the reſt of the *Kennel*, and faſtens upon the Lord who bought him, and bites him through; though he beſpeaks him, *I am Jeſus whom*

Montes à movendo, quia minimè movent.

Ichnobates Ovid *Metam.* page 3.

whom you perſecute.

2. I give you here a *finger pointing* to his *Preface, Tranſition to the Appendixes, and his Poſt-ſcript Letter to his Anſwerer*; where (if words can do it) he ſets in the *Front of his Book* Prologum Galeatum, *a Preface Helmet-ſteeled*; not ſuffering any *weapon-ſtroak* to pierce into his *Book*, if any will believe him, when he ſaith, *It is impoſſible that Reaſon ſtrained to its utmoſt can invent any other Principle* to ſecure us in Chriſtianity *but his Tradition*: words able to make a man afraid to aſſault his Diſcourſe, if he were a white-liverd Souldier. And no leſs hath he guarded it in the *Rere*, affixing his *Epilogum Calceatum & clavatum*, that is, ſhod it with iron, to ſtrike more dangerouſly than an Horſe flinging backward; So that his *Body of Diſcourſe* is armed *Cap a Pee*, that he fears no aſſault, thinking himſelf *ſhot-proof*. What elſe mean his vaunts, and his Laws, which he impoſeth on his Anſwerer? His Poſtcript of defence being more ſimple than the reſt; For wherein hath he brought controverſie from an endleſs to

a Concluſive way? unleſs it be in this, that all men muſt yeeld to his Concluſion, to *ſubſcribe to Popiſh-Tradition*; and then we are all friends. I ſuppoſe ſome ſuch eaſie Proteſtants he met with-all to, whom he communicated his thoughts, and received approbation from them. His pride in exalting himſelf is diſplaied enough in *his Tranſition*: As that the Oppoſers of Dr. *Pierce thought fit to anſwer his Teſtimonies*; but *left to him the way of Reaſon and Principles*, to make his Congreſs with him. This man then it ſeems is accounted the Maſter and Oracle of Reaſon among his Tribe. And again; *It is needleſs perhaps to the Generality (however very ſatisfactory to Examining wits,* ſuch as his own) to confute that in *Common*, which is already confuted by Retail. So then this Gentleman is an *whole-ſale Merchant* for *Rome* one of the *better rank*, others *retailers of a meaner trade*. Let him be ſo, but it had been better ſpoken by another, than himſelf. His demands of his Anſwerer, whereunto he accounts him obliged, are partly Rational, which ingenuous men would have obſerved

obſerved without his foreſtalling: but moſtly unreaſonable and frivolous which to grant, were to yeeld the Cauſe, and this is begging to the purpoſe. I have conformed to that which is, *To ſpeak to the main of his Book, and not catch at ſome odd words*; And therefore have I followed him ſtep by ſtep: though I confeſs, it liketh me better what I have only ſeen of an anſwer made by a *worthy perſon* to this Book, (after I had travell'd thorough it in my way) who hath more conciſely and ſufficiently methodized and anſwered theſe Diſcourſes; For indeed one ſheet of Paper may contain a Reply abundantly ſatisfactory to the ſtrength of Argument therein. It will be your wiſdome then to diſcern the man and his language. Mr. *Tillot-ſon.*

3. I propoſe it to your moſt ſerious thoughts and judgments. Doth not *Reaſon* bind ſuch a *ſcientifical* undertaker, (as he profeſſeth himſelf to be) to give exact explications, and definitions of thoſe terms which muſt make up his Concluſion? And what looſe and *Identical* deſcriptions doth he make of *Rule* and Faith ſingly and joyntly? Can your underſtandings

underſtandings bear ſuch frivolous and frothy dealings in matters of ſo high concernment as *Salvation*? I think not.

4. I appeal to you; Is it not moſt ſlanderous to ſay, that the Proteſtants make *Scriptures-Letter unſenc't* their Rule of Faith? Did ever any of them ſtate it ſo? Or is it not abſurd for him to impoſe it on them, that by Scrip-
pag. 38. Sect 34. tures they muſt mean the *Letter* only *unſenc't*, as he doth on the Biſhop of *Down*; when he tells him, that muſt be his meaning, and that the faith of our Church hath for its object *Ink thus figur'd in a Book*? Have not mens writings their minds and innate ſence in them, as well as their words; both of them being ſigns or ſignifications of things? Or, will he deny to God, that which is granted to men, even to ſence, and ſpirit his own word? Yet thus ſuperciliouſly he doth, and blaſphemouſly ſubjects the *Scriptures of God* to be *ſenced* by his *lying Tradition*. See and conſider and judge for God.

5. I ſhall mind you of his *equivocal* evaſions under the *Ambiguity of his Tradition*. Firſt he tells us, that Proteſtants

ſtants take a wrong aim, to diſpute againſt *things delivered*, inſtead of *Tradition it ſelf*. This is his new Invention, whereof he boaſts, and hopes hereby to elude his Adverſaries, as if they had miſtaken in their diſputes againſt Jeſuits, to argue againſt *the matter of Tradition*, (as if the Papiſts held them for faith) *Whereas they mean by Tradition, as the Rule of Faith, only the method of publickly delivering down Tenets*, &c. that is, *Oral-ſpeech* or *words* without ſence or matter. It is left to your judgments to diſcern, what *a new, nothing*, this *Invention* is; and whether his Fathers had not more wit to maintain *mode and matter of Tradition* to be the *Rule* of their Faith: A fuller reply to this the *Examen* may give.

2. His reciprocating *Popiſh-Oral-Tradition* with the *Univerſal Tradition* of mankin, is to be marked: for ſo he often ſtyleth it; as if all *mankind* were *Papiſts*; or his *Oral-delivery* were the ſpeech of them all. Whereas we know there are as many ſorts of Traditions as Men; and as many ſorts of Men as Nations or languages: neither could the

who

ſpreading Power of the *Roman Beaſt* over many Nations, make them all of one *Tradition*, as to matters of Religion, though for a time it prevailed much; and that as an Uſurper againſt Chriſt.

3. His confounding *Scriptural Tradition* with *Oral* is to be noted; as uſually he doth in citing of the Fathers; whereby he groſſely abuſeth his unskilful Readers, perſwading that all under the term of *Tradition*, muſt note his *Oral-Delivery*, when the Author cited meaneth it of Scripture. How he dodgeth in and out among theſe *Amphibolies* is worthy of moſt piercing obſervation to note out a *Deceiver*.

6. May I in the laſt place, as to the Man and his work only add this *Item* to you. Let not his *Flatteries* upon one hand, nor his Impudent boldneſs, preſumptuous Confidence, and bitter Invectives againſt his Adverſaries on the other, ſcare you or byaſs you: Weigh *Principles and Concluſions* juſtly and ſeriouſly. He hath hinted that your eyes will be intent upon his *Anſwerers*; and I dare not ſuſpect your impartial ſcrutiny of him and his Diſcourſes: Though he

he account all mad men who oppose him; yet you will finde them in their witts, speaking words of soberness and Truth for Christ.

Lastly not to extend an *Epistolary Bound* any Further, I shall close up with a Compassionate complaint, and Prayer. Is it not *Pity* that *Royal Heads and hearts* in their respective *Ditions* under Papal power, and noble Spirits in their several *Stations*, should be enchanted by such seducing Spirits? Lord, reveal thy Son not only unto, but in the hearts of such Princes, Nobles, great, and wise men, who desire to know and love thy Truth; that they may not be given up to beleive lies, but deliver their souls from the snares of those Hunters, and let thy Truth make them free.

Is it not *sad* to behold so many great Houses and Families consumed with droppings of sin, smitten with breaches by the Concussions of their Iniquities, and even subverted by Profaneness, Irreligion, and ungodliness, because they will not make *mention of the name of the Lord, nor call upon him?* Lord look from Heaven, and pity these who

Christ

do not, who cannot pity their own ſouls, who curſe God out of their habitations; and think it their Gentility. Sprinkle them that they may ſhut their mouths from blaſpheming; Let them ſee what was not told them: and let them conſider, what formerly they would not hear, even the ſecret of thy Salvation. Is it not further to be lamented, to ſee *notable Heads, Pregnants wits, Sagacious underſtandings* to ſpend their ſtudies upon vain Curioſities; and ſcarce take up a thought to reach the full aſſurance of underſtanding to the acknowledgment of the Myſterie of God, of the Father and of Chriſt? Is it not yet more pitiful to find ſuch ſpirits who beleeve the Prophets and Apoſtles, ſit down with *Agrippa* perſwaded only to be almoſt Chriſtians? who content themſelves with the letter *and form of Godlineſs*, and yet never make out to the *power of it*; How ſad is this to ſeem to come ſo neer to the Kingdom of Heaven, and yet fall ſhort at laſt. Such ſlight Chriſtianity makes many halt at this day between *God and Baal*: But they who thoroughly do the will of the Father ſhall know the Doctrine of Chriſt

Christ to be of God, and cleave unto it; Such are my hopes of you. Now the God of all Grace so teach you all that you may learn Christ, as the *Truth* is in Jesus, to put off the old, and put on the new man, and so walk and persevere in the Truth, that ye loose not the things, which ye have gained, but may receive a full reward, *Amen.*

Omnia admittet qui facit Doctrinae Christi jacturam Bez.

If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. Heb. 10.38.

THE PREFACE TO THE Intelligent READER, EXAMINED.

HE that would walk ſafely through this *Diſcourſers Labyrinth of Tradition* needs be wary, leſt he ſtumble at the *Threſhold of his Preface*; For it is a kind of a bogling ſtep made up of *even and odd*: Some things are ſmooth and handſome at which none may fear to trip: but other things are rough and uncouth like an heap of ſtones, or filth or rubbiſh lying at the door, over which it were better to leap, than to ſtep upon a looſe ſtone, and indanger a fall.

That which we look upon as ſomething equal, is a general Rule of Reaſon, *That there is a neceſſity of laying down a firſt Principle ſcientifically to infer any Concluſion*: Here we ſtand firm. The rugged and uneven ſtuffe as an heap is made up. 1. Of unjuſt and untrue *Reflexions* upon the *Proteſtants, and the Articles of the* Church of *England*, as if they contained nor, nor ſtuck unto any *Infallible Principle*, no not the *Scripture* it ſelf as of ſufficient Authority to ſet-

tle *True Faith* or overthrow the *false*: He chargeth them withall to be adverse to *self-evident Principles* which are the direct way to screne and to transfer disputes to a kind of *spatium Imaginarium*, &c. So making them witless Fellows. *Sf.* 1. 2.

2. His Apologie for his *Romish Catholicks* for yielding to dispute with *Protestants* not holding their first *Principle of Tradition* and so commends their Art, Prudence, and Charity in such condescension unto their Protestant Adversaries: Advising them to force them to some *first Principle*; which will, 1. Advantage the world in the method of concluding something with Evidence. 2. *The Romish Catholick Religion*: For it is *Impossible*, that by reason strained to the utmost, they can invent any other in this matter, but that of *Tradition*, *viz.* (*Popish.*) Most confident man! Who will dare to grapple with him? His words may startle Punies: Yet he is not so formidable; words are but wind. *Sf.* 3, 4.

3. Another job here is, a *modest* excuse of himself, for his *immodest confidence* in methodizing others for scientifical discourses; yet he hopes he doth but second nature in it; and so far it is well, with a jerk to Dr. *Pierce* and his *Abettor*, who he saith complains of the same fault in *Papists*, which he chargeth on *Protestants*, that they put one to answer that which hath been an hundred times said before. And all this happens

(as

(as he saith) through the not first settling of his *Tradition*, as the *first Principle*, which if done, than *Citations of Fathers* would be distinct, and hereby *security and Interpretation* of Scriptures-letter; and then victory would accrue to truth, *&c.* And Testimonies of Romish Catholicks would be irresistable. *Sf.* 5, 6. He begins to begg betimes, and had the Protestants no more wit than to grant him: They themselves might be begg'd for fools. Here is a great deal of *Rubble* and uncomely stuffe lyeth at the Entry; *dirty reproaches and Parasitical flatteries and self-Indulgence, and proud Confidence* heapt up together: We are resolved to leap over this dunghil at once; and then stand still a little and consider what in this preface is worthy of reply, and thereunto to answer. 1. His *Postulatum*, or claim for laying down a *First Principle*. 2. His *Dilemma*, or catching Argument to *Protestants*; whereby he hopes to hitch them upon the one side, or the other.

To both these we shall make reply, after we have shortly premonish't the *Reader* of this *Discourser's Art* in laying down his *first Principle, and of his groundless Confidence, That no other can be laid to give down the knowledge of Christ and his Doctrine, but his Popish Tradition.* Let these things be noted.

1. In his Scientifical method (unto which he most highly pretends) the conclusion

which he aimeth to make known throughout all his Diſcourſes ſeemeth to be this, *That the Traditionary-Faith of the Romiſh Church, as ſtated in their Trent-Council, whereof they ſtand now poſſeſſed, is truly the Faith of Chriſt, which they have uninterruptedly received from him unto this day, only by the living voice of his Church which is Tradition.* This the Intelligent Reader will diſcern to be the driſt of his whole book: *Tradition* then as noting the Romiſh Faith delivered is the matter, by him to be concluded.

2. In order to infer this, he uſeth his firſt *ſelf-evident Principle* as his *Medium*, which is *Oral-Tradition* only, the *living voice* of his Church, and not *Scriptural*; This is *Tradition* (as he ſtyleth it) *ſine re Traditâ*: and ſeemeth hence to reaſon thus; The Traditionary faith, whereof Romiſh Catholicks ſtand poſſeſſed at this day, is truly Chriſts, deſcended from him, becauſe it hath been brought unto them by *Oral-Tradition* alone, or living voice, and not by Scripture: Wherein *Tradition* is both *Principle and Concluſion*: *Traditionary* faith is true, becauſe it is *Traditionary*, or given down by an Oral-living voice. In this *medium* is all the ſtrength of this mighty Diſcourſer, which he labours to maintain through-

out

out his Treatise, with all the skill he hath, though all in vain.

3. In his ventilations about this he dodgeth in and out under the equivocal or ambiguous term of *Tradition*: Sometimes he speaketh of it as *natural and general* concerning all Mankind, by which things natural of universal and necessary use are given down from man to man: Sometimes he takes it more specially for *Tradition Ecclesiastical* whereby matters of Religion are given down from Father to Son and this he impropriates to his *Romish Church* to have it through Generation and Generation from Christ, which he madly avoucheth to be as extensively and certainly true, as any natural delivery of those things, which are obvious to every eye: As if *voluntary Tradition* were not subject to more mistakes then the known dictates *of nature*. Again, in one place he pretends to speak of *Tradition*, as the mode of delivering things by living voice without consideration of matters delivered: In another place he useth it for the doctrine given out under it. Once more we have him one while speaking of *Tradition-Oral* in his own sence, and another time abusing it in urging the Fathers who frequently understand it of Scriptural-*Tradition*, and he still transferrs it to delivery by speech; and no way else. Now he shifting under these ambiguities deludes unwary souls: But he may

know that his Protestant Adversaries discern him, and can distinguish better of *Tradition*, than to grant all to be his, which he vainly claims: Yea and will tell him, That it is possible for them, without straining reason to its utmost to lay down a first Principle fully demonstrating the truth of their Faith derived from Christ and not recurr to his *Tradition Popish*. The man hath never the more *Sure-footing* by his High presumptions: these are slippery precipices. We leave this Method of his to be considered. And now to reply.

1. He calls loudly upon us to lay down our *first Principle* in disputing for the Faith of Protestants, against that Faith of Papists; As for his we utterly deny. And for our own, we shall single it out, after we have orderly proposed some Truths which are truly *Postulata* among Christians, such wherein they agree, or in reason ought to agree.

1. *In the Controversie between Protestants and Papists both Parties deal about the Truest, best, and highest of Sciences, even the knowledge of God as he is discovered unto us the Author of Salvation.* Wherein by the wisedome of God, we have digested into the sweetest order both the conclusion to be known, and the Principle demonstrating the same. This is Science purely *Metaphysical, Transcendental and Divine*, The true *Prima Philosophia*, which the Papists if Christians, will

will grant; or upon that account are bound to yeeld together with us.

2. The great and general Conclusion to be demonstrated in this Science, is, *That God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their sins*, or, *That there is no other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved, but only the name of Jesus Christ crucified, and through faith in his Name.* This is the great Truth concluded in the Gospel, by the true knowledge whereof is eternal life. Herein the Papists also as professed Christians, do or must agree with us in reason. 2 Cor. 5. 19. Act. 4. 12. Act. 10. 43.

3. They will agree (we suppose) in this also, *That the Fathers will revealed by his Son the Eternal word, is the proper, and sole cause or Principle making certainly known this way of his Salvation.* He is therefore styled *the word of the Father* discovering him, and the *word of life* revealing it to the Sons of men. Joh. 1. 1. 18. 1 Joh. 1. 1.

4. Their agreement we expect in this likewise; *That the eternal word the Son of God did appoint the preachings and writings of his Prophets and Apostles, as the due means of making known this his Fathers will about the way of Salvation sufficiently unto the world.* Christians cannot deny this. Eph. 3. 5. 1 Pet. 1. 10 11, 12.

5. The *Trent-Council* (to which the Discourser subscribes as giving the living voice of his Church) agreeth with us, *That the Scriptures of the Prophets and Apostles in the*

2 Pet. 1. 16,19. *old and new Testament are the true Word of God expressing his will unto us*; For (say they) one God is the Author of both. This hath been the Confession of the Christian Church in all ages.

Heb.11.1. 2 Cor.4.13. 1 Cor. 2. 14. 6. A Christian consent of all, we doubt not of in this: *That by the Spirit of Faith, alone, this spiritual Truth, both of Gospel-Principle and Conclusion, can be received and made evident.* Natural man cannot receive them, for they are spiritually discerned,

Mat.11.25, and are strange things to the *Scioliſts* of the world; To whom they are not demonstrable by reason of their blindness.

Ps.78.5.6. 7. 7 This also we lay down as to be agreed on by Christians, *That under Gods wise Providence Tradition both Oral and Scriptural of the Doctrine delivered by the Prophets and Apostles from Fathers to Children, is necessary to make known Gods will revealed as the Rule of their Faith and manners throughout all Generations:* To this the Trent-Fathers assent, and no less the Discourser here; saving that, They speak of *Tradition* in their own sense, as *Popish*; which we reject as false and fabulous: And we take *Tradition* genuinly, as that just and honest means by word and writing to give down Gods mind in Christ for salvation from age to age: Wherein it appears, Protestants do not deny but strongly assert that which is *Tradition* indeed of *Divine Institution:*

8. In

8. In the last place we challenge this as requiring consent from Christians, *That the Traditions of Gods will concerning faith unto salvation both oral and Scriptural, are commensurate, and coequal*: So that nothing is written but that which was spoken by those holy men of God; neither ought any thing to be spoken in the name of God, but that which is written: Herein the *Discourser* with his *Trent-Representative*, will draw back, but out of former Concessions, they are held to it: For if the *Scripture* be the *word of God* (as they have granted) It must reveal the will of God fully to salvation; And then any *Tradition*, which is not found rooted in and expressly issuing there-from, cannot give out the will of God, but is expressly convinced of falshood thereby: *Word* and *Writing* then must speak the same mind of God. From all these Truths laid before us, whereunto Christians do and must agree, we shall gather our *first Principle* which we fix, as our Foundation in Controversie against Papists, and all other Patrons and Abettors of Error who corrupt the Gospel of Christ, This it is.

The will of God revealed from his Son, the Eternal Word concerning the way of Salvation through faith in Christ by the Preachings and writings of the Prophets and Apostles, is the only true Rule of Faith, and of obedience issuing there-from.

If

If therefore the *Discourser* will let us go to work upon this Foundation, and try whether *his Faith or ours* will be able to endure the Test thereby: This is that *Light*, or *Fire* risen in the *Gospel-day* which will try all mens Faith, works and superstructures; that which is wood, hay or stubble will be consumed by it; but that which is silver, gold, and precious stones will be burnished and gloriously manifested by this light, and he that builds on this Foundation such suitable, and excellent matter, shall receive his due reward. Why Papists should not agree with us in this *First Principle*, if they be Christians, we know no reason; especially when their Consent is evinced to be necessary, from their former Concessions: But perhaps the man hopeth to catch us in his *Dilemma*, and so will shift of this, and force us to accept of his; we shall therefore now try that.

2. *His double Catch-pole Argument* he proposeth thus: *Either Controversie* (or the *skill which enables us to conclude that Christs Faith is certainly derived down to us*) *is a Science* or *not*; *If not, why do we meddle with it? Since without Science all is meer beating the air, and empty ignorant talking*: *If it be, Common sence tells us it must be grounded on some First and self-evident Principle*; we must add (which Protestants lay not down): So the Inference intended is, that the Protestants on both sides are at a loss, take which they will however he thus expresseth it not. 1. We

1. We need not fear either wing of this Adversaries power, we shall begin with the first, and we must here question his Terms: What is this *Controversie*? What this *Science*? As, For *Controversie* to be a *science*, is a strange uncouth expression to us: By *Controversie* we understand a *Dissertation* or *Litigation* about matters, wherein men agree not in their judgments whether *Humane* or *Divine*, or is in the *Art of disputing*, which is *Logick*, an *Instrument* by which men are enabled to draw Conclusions rightly out of premises. This is usefull indeed in and about Sciences, as *Divinity*, *Physick*, *&c.* to order *Principles*, thereby to infer *conclusions*: But that this is a *science* properly so called, we deny; whatever the Jesuits may hold in their Schools. For *Science* genuinly taken is of things naturally digested into *Causes and Effects*: *Principles and Consequents*: But *Controversie* or *Logical dissertation* is in opening, distinguishing and ordering notions, under which these things are imported, which are objects of Science truly so called, that so one thing may be rationally and clearly inferred from another. No reason than is there to acknowledge *Controversie a Science*, no not as described by the *Discourser*, *to be the skill enabling them to conclude that Christs Faith is certainly derived down unto them* Yet it is no beating of the air or empty Ignorant talking to make use of this skill of arguing without *paralogistical deceits*, to bring unto the true science or

knowledge

knowledge of salvation by Christ, which is the main conclusion of the Gospell. This *horn* of the Argument is then broken that it cannot hurt us; *Controversie* (as described) is no *Science*, yet may there be good use of it, when it becommeth a true *Contention* for the faith of the Gospel. And to retort unto this *Dilemmatist*; Never was the Apostles-censure more justly applied than to those *Romish Controvertists*, whose arguings are *perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the Truth, pretending oppositions of Science falsly so called.*

1 Tim. 6. 5. 20.

2. Let us deal a little with the other part of his *Gin* (though we are safe enough from danger already by the nulling of the first part of his *Dilemma.*) *If this controversie be a science, then must be laid down some first Principle self-evident.* We have denied *Controversie* properly to be a *Science*, and, therefore have a little to do with this upon those terms. Yet we acknowledg there is the *truest and greatest Science*, even the *knowledge* of the main Gospel-Conclusion, *That Salvation is by faith alone in Christ Jesus*, whereabout this *Controversie* may be exercised; and so hath been a long time between *Protestants and Papists*: to discover either *who hold this Faith*, or how they have *had it brought down* unto them, each party claims to have possession of it; and denieth it unto the other. The Protestants prove theirs to be *the true Faith* from the will of God revealed Originally in the *Scriptures* and delivered by th:

the Prophets and Apostles and the faithful Witnesses of God, who through all Persecutions both Pagan and Antichristian have brought down the Discovery of it unto them. The Papists, as this *Discourser* represents them, argue the justice of their claim only from *Oral-Tradition* of their fore-fathers indefectively from Christ; as they most groundlesly pretend, which will evidently appear by that vast distance from, and opposition of the present professed faith of *Rome* unto that delivered by Christ, and his Apostles.

Now therefore most weakly and absurdly doth this Man make his *Oral-Tradition* to be the first *Principle* to prove his present *Popish-Faith* to be true, arguing thus that it must be true; because *Traditionary* by word of mouth, for then every thing so delivered, would be *true*, which is grosly fooliſh: And as to his pretended *Indefectiveness* of this delivery from Christ it is a *Dream* and will be proved a vanity in the after-Examination. And although Protestants urge the *Scripture* their *Principle*, yet is it not for the writings or letters sake, but for the will of God contained in it; For *voices* and *letters* (as such) cannot be *Principles* demonstrating any conclusion of Truth; but only remote means to help men to know such *Principles*, which do infer things issuing from them demonstratively.

To clear therefore this Notion of *Principle* from ambiguity wherein this *Discourser* intangles

tangles himſelf, and perplexeth his Readers, while he ſtyleth his *Tradition*, ſometimes the firſt *Principle*, other times the *Rule of Faith*, elſewhere oft-times the *Rule of Faith*, as if theſe terms were all *ſynonymous*: So he confounds them through his diſcourſes; but under groſs miſtake. We therefore thus diſtinguiſh. This notion of *Principle* is 1. Grammatical, and ſo it noteth the firſt Elements or letters in the *Alphabet*, of which are made ſyllables, words and ſentences, the teaching and knowledge of which are the firſt and remote means to bring to higher underſtanding of matters more ſublime: So this notion of *Principle* is applied to ſuch things as are firſt helps to lead unto any knowledge; As the voice of ſpeech or *Oral-Tradition* without matters delivered: In which ſence this Man tells us we are to underſtand him. (*Diſ.* 5. *p.* 47.) So the *Legal-Types* are called the Principles of Chriſt, as being the firſt helps delivered for the knowledge of him. If this be all his meaning in ſtyling his *Tradition* by word of mouth a *Principle*, we ſhall joyn iſſue with him, and yield that both *letters written, and words ſpoken* are the *A, B, C.* to faith, or remote helps thereunto; but we deny alſo that in this ſence it is peculiar to *Oral-Tradition* to be this *Principle*; for letters are as helpful in their kind: Neither are theſe means convertible with true Faith as there End; for they are helps to convey falſhood as well as Truth.

Ἀρχὴ, στοιχεῖον, θεμέλιον. Heb. 5. 12. Heb. 6. 1.

2. This

2. This term *Principle* is *Logical*, and so it denoteth, some *first proposition of truth*, that cannot be denied, from which *another subordinate* is necessarily and certainly concluded. In this sence have both Protestants and Papists used it in their Disputes for making good their own conclusions. And so do we take it now in dealing with this *Discourser*, disproving Romish Faith now held by them to be Christs; and proving the faith of the Gospel held by Protestants to be truly his: And to demonstrate this we have laid down our first Principle. viz. *That the will of God revealed by the Preachings and writings of the Prophets, and Apostles, is the only Rule of the true Faith in Christ.* And laying down this we escape all hurt by the other *horn of his Dilemma.* Now let this man of science tell us, whether his oral-tradition, separated from the matter delivered in it, be a Principle Grammatical or Logical: He will not, for shame, say the former, to reduce us to the *A, B, C.* of knowledge this cannot be scientifical of his conclusion; and if he say it is Logical it must be a proposition of a first undeniable truth, which must necessarily conclude that the Romish faith is truly Christs and infallibly descended from him; but this it cannot. The first Truth indeed which can conclude that Faith in Christ is true, is this that the holy Scriptures of the Prophets and Apostles are the word of God, revealing his will for true faith in Christ unto salvation: Hereunto his

Trent-

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Trent Fathers agree (unto whom he professeth allo yalty): And it being granted by them, as a first Truth; it is a lawful *Postulatum* from Protestants to Papists, to begin with this as the scientifical Principle to conclude the true faith in Christ. If the true revealed will of God, cannot give sure knowledge of this, what Tradition of man can? These things premised, The *Protestant* claims and holds possession of the true Faith of Christ; And in the *Reformation*, they moved nothing of the *Truth* of the *Gospel*, but cast out much filth brought in by *Popish Tradition*. They are fixt therefore upon their first *Principle* which the Discourser cannot rationally deny. Upon which if he will enter into the lists with them, they are ready to meet him. If not, they do not frankly and more truly declare what the best reason declares to *ingenuous wits*, not only that the flashy books of his and other *Pseudo-Catholicks* deserve not a word of answer, but will have the heaviest rebukes from God, who will reprove them, for taking his Covenant into their mouths, and hating to be reformed. None shall deliver them in that day.

SURE-

SURE FOOTING Examined.

The First Discourse.

THE Author both in his Preface and Entrance into his Discourse premiseth as fair demands, as may be, to be grounds of rational arguing in matters of Controversie debated between him and his Adversaries, but how unevenly he followeth them in his mistaken way, hath appeared partly in the Examination of his Preface, and will do more in sifting his Discourses.

1. He proposeth this as determined by Reason, *That to know the meaning of those words, which express the thing under debate is necessary for satisfaction in that matter.* That Logick assures it to be a ready way to a clear decision of most perplexing difficulties: That the meaning of the word includes in it self the nature of the thing, together with the Considerations and Attributes intrinsecally

belonging to that nature; ſo that we may know what is to be affirmed and denied of that thing: Therefore he applyeth this method unto the preſent debate about *the Rule of Faith*, to know the meaning of the words, which may give a clear and brief ſatisfaction, both *what is not that Rule*, and *what is it.*

Unto this fair and plauſible demand; ſo far as ſolid Reaſon doth approve it, we ſhall grant without diſpute. Meanings of words about all Controverſies muſt be underſtood to bring debates unto a rational period: yet with reſpect to the reaſon added, *That words include the nature of things*, &c. Our grant muſt be with limitation; For notions do not alwayes truly expreſs the nature of things ſignified by them, but may be diſſentaneous or contrary to the ſame: We therefore thus limit our Grant; That words or names have their force or import from the Authority of the Impoſers; If they be by God himſelf impoſed, or by divine Inſtinct, they doubtleſs import the nature of the thing, ſo far as God would ſignifie it by them: but if words be framed by mens phancies to denote what they would have them, they fall far ſhort of declaring the nature of things, yea and ſometimes are oppoſite thereunto. Notional deſcriptions of things therefore are oft-times faulty, and help not to knowledge. Let us therefore in our debate conſider theſe words or terms, *Rule*, *Faith*, and *the Rule of Faith*, as God ſpeaketh of them in his Word; and we are agreed,

agreed: we ſhall have there the true meaning of them, and upon good ground may we expect clear ſatisfaction, *What the Rule of Faith is*, and *what not*. No more needs to be ſaid unto this, but to animadvert, That here the Author puts a great ſtreſs upon words to open the nature of things; but elſe-where he ſleights words, Grammar, Criticiſm (in the the beſt ſenſe) as wordiſh or airy fanſies, when his Adverſaries pinch him to the purpoſe in opening the mind of God thereby in the Scriptures.

2. He begins to tell us what is the meaning of the word *Rule*; *It ſignifieth a thing* (ſaith he) *which is able to regulate or guide him, who uſeth it:* Hereupon he addeth *that it muſt have all thoſe qualities, by which it is able to do that, its proper Effect.*

This is a ſhort account of the meaning of the *Rule* here mentioned; and may ſerve to deſcribe a Carpenters Rule unto his boy for drawing lines upon Timber to make an Idol: but we muſt look for a better diſcovery of it, as to its nature and uſe in this place. In general: *Regula eſt menſura recti & obliqui. A Rule is a Meaſure both of things ſtraight and crooked.* So that the nature of a *Rule* is to be a *Meaſure* meeting out things meaſurable, and ſo diſtinguiſhing ſtraight from crooked, and right from wrong: and hereunto it guides the hand that uſeth it.

Iſa. 44. 13.

Ὁ κάνων τὸ μέτρον ἐστὶ τοῦ ἄθεος καὶ τοῦ καιπύλου. *Ariſt.*

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This term *Rule* then is diversified in its sense according to the various kinds of things unto which commonly it is applyed: As,

1. When applyed to natural things, it hath a meaning natural.

2. When applyed to things Artificial, and Mechanical it must have a sense sutable, and consistent with those matters.

3. When applyed to Moral concernments, it must have a meaning competent to moral and civil actions.

4. When applyed to divine, and spiritual matters, it must have a sense proper and peculiar unto those affairs of Religion, in points of faith and practise. Now to this sense of a Rule (whatever it be found to be) are we bound up in our present debate.

The use of that word, which is by ours translated *Rule*, we find by the Spirit expressed in three Epistles, (ὁ κανὼν) which the Author knoweth is frequently used, or abused rather by his *Trent-Fathers*, in their *Canons*. Of this word if we may give the meaning, as in the premises is allowed, we find it to be both of a more restrained sense; as in that passage of the Apostle, *According to the measure of the Rule, which God hath distributed unto us, a measure to reach even unto you*: which Rule was a special revelation of Gods will unto him, that he should abide at *Corinth*, and go through his measure in preaching the Gospel there, because God had much people in that place and City.

2 Cor. 10. 13. κατὰ τὸ μέτρον τοῦ κανόνος, &c. Acts 18. 9, 10, 11.

Again,

Again, we have it in a more large ſenſe, wherein we are now concerned. So we read, when the Apoſtle had declared that *nothing availed any thing in Chriſt Jeſus*, that is, *the Church of Chriſt, but the New Creature* or Creation, he ſubjoyneth this incouragement to thoſe, who are conformed thus in Chriſt, *As, many as walk according to this Rule, Peace be on them*; where by *Rule* is meant the Will of God in the New Creation revealed unto them, who ſhare in it, meaſuring out the line for believing and walking according to his good pleaſure, who created them. A like uſe we find of it by the ſame Apoſtle to the *Philippians, Let us walk by the ſame Rule*: He had been preſſing them to purſue perfection in Chriſt, whereunto he giveth his own example as a directive, and thereupon exhorts all that partake of that high calling, according to the pitch in the ſtature of Chriſt, whereunto they had attained, to walk by the *ſame Rule*, that is, the Will of God made known by the Preachings and Writings of the Prophets and Apoſtles. So that the ſenſe, meaning or nature of this *Rule* in our debate, (it being divine) is the Will of God revealed, meaſuring out the lines unto creatures for true believing, and walking ſafely unto attaining the purchaſed ſalvation. Unto this meaning of the *Rule* we ſhall adhere.

Gal. 6. 15 16.

Ὅσοι τῷ κανόνι τούτῳ στοιχήσουσιν.

Phil. 3. 16. τῷ αὐτῷ, στοιχεῖν κανόνι.

3. He addeth unto his ſence of a *Rule* the proper Qualities of it. as 1. That it muſt be *evident as to its Exiſtence* unto ſenſe, if it be to guide it; or to the underſtanding, if it be

an Intellectual Rule:, *Sect.* 3.— 2. That it must be Evident to all those who are to be regulated by it, that there is such a thing, *Sect.* 4.— 3. That it must be knowable to those who can have doubts in them (that is, in a manner all mankind, even the rudest vulgar) that the Intellectual Rule hath a vertue to guide their understandings right, and so deserveth to be relied on as a Rule. Wherefore it must be, either Evident by its own light, or Evidenceable by and to reason, *Sect.* 5. — 4. That it must *be certain in it self*, or establisht on sure grounds: otherwise it is not possible, that can be in true sense called a *Rule*, which one may follow, and yet go wrong, or be misled, *Sect.* 6.

All these properties we freely grant to belong to that which is truly a *Rule*; only reserving, that there are others also considerable, and to be added in their place, as necessary to our *Rule* under debate, as any of these.

4. In the 7th. and 8th. *Section*, He giveth us the meaning of the word *Faith*; where (having premised that he intends not to give a rigorous School-definition of it, but only to reflect upon some of its properties) he giveth this account; *Faith is the same with Believing* * *of God in revealed Truths*, which imports necessarily some *kind of knowledge of supernatural things*; as Heaven its self, and the imcomparably great Good of the next Life: Moreover Love also is annexed by him unto this Knowledge or Faith, (as he parallels them)

* In the common sense of mankind; *And Divine Faith is the believing.*

them) without which none can come to heaven: *Both* which *knowledge and love* are had by *Mankind*, only by *believing*; *and hence is Faith conceived, neceſſary for the Salvation of* Mankind, learned, and vulgar, being capable of the ſame; which faith alſo he aſſerts *to be a virtue* mainly conducing *to Bliſs*, and its Influence towards it (which he calls its merit) conſiſting in this, that it makes us ſubmit our underſtandings to the *Divine veracity*, and ſo to adhere to thoſe Truths as raiſe us to heaven. *S. 16.* This is all that he giveth in this diſcourſe to make out the ſence of Faith.

With reſpect to this diſcovery of Faith, we ſhall deal openly with the Author, in granting what is true, in deſiring what is defective, and in denying what is falſe in it.

1. We grant that *Faith and Believing are ſynonomous* or of the ſame ſignification in the Common ſence of *Engliſh Mankind*; and that *Divine Faith* is the believing of God in revealed Truths, which imports knowledge of thoſe ſupernatural good things as Heaven and Eternal Life: Again, that Faith, which giveth this knowledge of ſupernatural good things, worketh by love toward them, without which none can come to Heaven; And this Faith is neceſſary for Salvation unto all ſorts of men, learned and unlearned, of higher and of the vulgar ſort: In fine we yield

this *Faith* to be a ſpecial virtue of Chriſt mainly conducing unto *Bliſs* by ſubmitting mens underſtandings unto *Divine veracity*, and cauſing them to adhere to thoſe Truths, which being truly received will raiſe up ſouls to Heaven: This is the ſum, which we can gather out of many words of the Author about, *the meaning of Faith*: and all this we yield freely, and ſo far are agreed.

2. Yet as defective to a fuller deſcription of *Faith* needful in our debate, we deſire ſome addition to be ſupplied: as mainly the very *Form* of it, which muſt *difference* it from *Faith* that is not ſaving. This by the Apoſtle is phraſed, *The Spirit of Faith*, or *Spiritual Faith*: which we conceive not to be ſufficiently expreſſed by *Divine Faith* forementioned; For *Faith* may be ſtiled *Divine* upon ſeveral accounts. 1. Objectively only, as receiving thoſe Propoſitions of Truth given by God; this Humane Faith, or Credence may do, which is meerly Natural, and inſufficient thereby to raiſe up ſouls to Heaven: This is not that which bringeth to Salvation of it ſelf. 2. Subjectively alſo, which is called Divine. 3. *Ratione Principii*, from the immediate Creator and Donor of it, which is God, and he directs this lot of precious Faith unto thoſe who are appointed to Salvation: *Humane Faith* is his *Creature*, but this *Spirit of Faith*, is his

2 Cor. 4. 13.

Eph. 2 8. 2 Pet. 1. 1.

ſpecial

ſpecial *workmanſhip in Chriſt Jeſus.*

2. *Ratione Formæ*, from the intrinſecal formal nature of it, which is *Spirit*, or *Spiritual and Divine*; now Faith is a member of the new birth or Creature; and that is ſaid to be *ſpirit of ſpirit*, or the *Divine Nature.* This we muſt look upon as tranſcendental in its kind, ſeeing it iſſueth from God its Author, who puts forth the very power of his Arm to work it, and make men believe: We muſt deſire this then in that Faith about the Rule whereof we are now diſcourſing. 2 Cor. 4. 13. Joh. 3. 6. 2 Pet. 1. 4 Iſay. 53. 1. Rom. 10. 16.

3. *Ratione finis*, from the end is it rightly ſtiled *Divine*, becauſe it maketh the ſoul reſt in God, and acquieſs in nothing elſe: This is noted of *Abraham*, That he was ſtrong in faith giving glory to God, yea Faith is not ſatisfied but in God alone, as its full Reſt. This is indeed *Divine Faith*, and being ſo taken we conſider it in this place: which may yet more appear by theſe proper Acts of it. Pſ. 116. 7. Rom. 4. 20.

1. That it only doth *evidence* the inviſible Father in the Son, and by his Spirit working out ſalvation for ſinners. Heb. 11. 1, 27.

2. That it cauſeth *Aſſent* unto all the Truths of God in his will revealed unto this Salvation. Rom. 10, 9, 10.

3. That it worketh *Affiance* or *Truſt* in this God and his word, for the perfecting of this Salvation unto ſouls who cleave to him. Joh. 3. 16. Joh. 6. 29.

4. That

Heb. 11.1. Isai. 28.16. 4. That it consequently realizeth or substantiates things hoped for, and so holdeth out souls in the certain expectation of them. All this is necessary to be known and experimented by all souls of all ranks, learned and unlearned, in order to their salvation: Of faith under this discovery do we treat, and now are about the stating the Rule of it.

3. That which we deny as odious in the former discovery of faith by the Author is the *Merit* of the work or influence of it as to blessedness; which we detest,

1. As *brutish*, that any Act of God's own Grace in man should be meritorious as to him who gave it; The receiving alms by the beggars hand is proportionably more meritorious towards a Fellow-Creature giving it, than any work of duty from man to God: and yet none will thank the beggar for taking; but he confesseth himself a debtor to the giver.

2, We cannot but abhorre it, as savouring of *Antichristian Pride* and arrogancy against God, so much as to pretend to be able to merit of him, any thing but Hell. Let the Author then hugg his meritorious Faith and fit a *Rule* for it: We profess, that Faith alone which emptieth man of himself, and abaseth him, giving all glory to God for his free grace in our Salvation.

We shall leave this, with one single not

note impressed on it. In all *Religions*, wherein a Godhead is confessed, *true and false*, *Mahometan*, or other Pagan Professions; as they all pretend *Faith* in their Gods, so none (that we know) arrogate any merit to their Faith, save only Papists. That which is worst of all, thinks it deserves best at the hands of God: *Popish Faith* then is that only which is asserted meritorious here by the Author. He had need therefore to find out such a *Rule* which may maintain the merit of it; and none can do this but his Tradition: He hath therefore wisely designed it.

5. He proceeds to speak of *the Rule of Faith jointly*, and to determine several properties belonging to it as it is such a *Rule*, in *S.* 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, & 16. And he summeth up all in *S.* 17. which thus he orderly ranketh.

1. The Rule of Faith must be plain and self-evident, as to its Existence, to all. 1.

2. It must be Evidenceable, as to its Ruling Power, to the Vulgar. 2.

3. It must be apt to settle and justifie undoubting persons. 3.

4. It must be apt to satisfie the most Sceptical Dissenters, and rational Doubters. 4.

5. It must be able to convince the most obstinate and acute Adversaries. 5.

6. That

6. 6. That it be built upon immoveable grounds, and be certain in its self.

7. 7. That it be absolutely ascertainable to us.

We shall not weary the Readers with multiplying word for word, but we have those two things to try.

1. The meaning of those words jointly, *Rule of Faith.*

2. The Properties claimed thereunto in this place.

To the first, It is but needful to understand those words in Syntaxe, as well as in their single posture; and that because the Author changeth often his form of expressing this: Sometimes he stileth it, *the Rule of Faith* as in the *Titles of his Discourse*, and elsewhere: Sometimes he speaketh of it as the *Rule or Means to Faith S. 9. S. 11. S. 15.* And so several times in his following Treatise: Where also all along he calleth it the *Rule of Faith.*

At this various Expression in this Controversie we are at a stand, knowing a great difference between *Means* leading to Faith, *and the Rule of Faith it self*: We may grant something to be the means (or as the Author calls it) *a Rule to Faith*, which we shall never yield to be *the Rule of Faith*, about which Protestants contend with Papists. It was doubtless a good means to bring *Simon Peter* to the Faith, when

when his Brother *Andrew* told him, we have found the *Messias*, So was *Phillips* report to *Nathaniel*, we have found him of whom *Moses* in the Law, and the Prophets did write, Jesus of *Nazareth*, a good help to lead him to Christ, and to faith in him: no less was the work of *Phillip* and *Andrew* helping the Greeks to come to Jesus, a very ready means to bring them to Faith in him; yet was not this speech of theirs the *Rule of Faith*; For that was only the *Will of Christ* himself the Eternal word of the Father, which was revealed to them. We shall yield the same to *speech and writing* of Christ, that they are *means* to Faith, but of themselves no *Rule of Faith*. Joh. 1. 41, 45. Joh. 12, 22,

In the present Controversie therefore we desire to clear the force of this *Genitive* (*of Faith*) which is not here the *Genitive* of the *End* terminating the *means*; but of the subject regulated or to be ruled, and ordered by that *Rule* unto which it is subjected; So that the præexistence of *Faith* in the soul is supposed before the actual regulation of it by the *Rule*, for how can that be ruled which is not? In this sence do the Protestants understand the *Rule of Faith*, in their Disputes with the Jesuits; wherein these also seem to agree, however they shift sometimes in ambiguous expressions: Of this therefore we fore-warn the Author; that we put a great

great difference between *means directing to Faith*, *and the rule disposing of Faith*: To this we shall keep close in our present work, and make bold to call him back unto it, where his words vary from it, if he pretend to speak any thing to the *Rule of Faith*. And this premised, we shall consider now the properties of this *Rule* as they are proposed by him.

As to the proper conditions named by the Author, they are not all applicable unto that which is stiled, *a Means or Rule to Faith*; neither as we suppose, so intended by him, but to that which is truly *the Rule of Faith*; which must command, order, and direct Faith to work regularly to its end, which is the salvation of souls: And all these which are orderly forementioned by us as urged by him together with the reasonable grounds of them, we grant, and shall admit them in our further Examination following; but these are not all, to which we are bound up. We desire therefore the addition of others inseparable to that, which truly is *the Rule of Faith*, which the Discourser must also grant as issuing from the intrinsecal nature and causes of it; and this ground being laid, we shall by them proceed both to the Examination, and Demonstration of the *rule of Faith*, following the Author in the method of his Discourses.

All

All the Properties mentioned by him, are drawn from that habitude or respect, which the *rule* should have unto the persons or subjects to be ruled by it: This in general he makes all mankind, but in special, sorts them into vulgar, rude, or unlearned, and into more intelligent, ingenious, or learned men; and into those that are setled in the Faith, and into Heterodox, Infidels, who are Aliens to it; so again into doubting or Sceptical souls, and such as are obstinate and acute Adversaries unto the Faith of Christ: with respect to these several sorts he frameth the properties of that *Rule*, which he calleth *Means to Faith, and Rule of Faith*, promiscuously and unfitly.

But those properties, which we desire to add, arise from God the Author and Object of Faith, who alone can give *Rule* to it, and from the nature of faith it self, which is to be ruled by it: as

1. The true *Rule of Faith* must have *Supream, Soveraign Power, praeceptive* as well as *directive* unto Faith: For what is *Faith* in its being, as a special Grace infused, but the creature and workmanship of God? And if so, none can *give Law and Rule to it*, but *its Maker*; and that *Rule* must imply Gods own supream Authority in it; no less can order *Faith* than this; The Command of God, and the Faith of Jesus, are of the same descent Eph. 2. 3.

and

and must be kept together. Again, the true genuine *Operation of Faith is reciprocal* with God; this giveth God that glory which he will not part withall to another; therefore must the *Rule* of this supremely order it unto God; neither is it to be directed by any other, but what is subordinate to this. He will not have his *Faith* any more than his *Fear* taught by the precepts of men. Supreme then is the *rule of Faith* above all.

Isai. 26.4. Joh. 14.1.

Deut. 32.4.

2. *The rule of Faith*, (which is genuine and sincere) must *be purely right and strait* not subject to any warping, or yielding unto the crooked dispositions of men. For it is given from that God, who is *Rectitude it self*; and he hath revealed it to bring souls directly to him-self, that they may not miscarry. Otherwise the Rule of Faith cannot measure true, and false, or right and wrong, which is the most intrinsecal nature of it. *Absolute Rectitude* then is the inseparable *Property* of the *Rule of Faith*.

Psal. 19. 8.

3. The *rule of Faith*, is that which giveth a compleat measure, and full proportion to Faith, for all its Operations toward God: So that *Faith and its Rule* are Commensurate: Likeness of Proportion then, the *Rule* must have to *Faith*, as *Faith* to *It*: They must meet even, or else Faith will be found faulty and so want its measure: *Proportionating power* then

then is a due property of the *Rule of Faith* ordering Faith, its pitch in working, and in its duration.

4. The *Rule of Faith* consists in *Indivisibility*. It is *one, simple, undivided* thing; there is no adding to it, nor taking from it, nor mixing with it: but as *Faith* is a *simple* Grace singled out to God, so the *Rule* must be as *simple or undivided*, which keepeth *Faith unfeigned*, and guides inseparably unto God. *A warping Rule*, will easily make *a warping Faith*. *Indivisibility* then is a natural *Property of the Rule of Faith*. So much for our Addition; other things might be added, but they will fall either under these, or under the other forenamed by him. And now having gotten this Discovery of the *rule of Faith*, we shall go along with the Discourser, and try to what and to whose claim this truly belongeth; as he directeth in his next Discourse.

1918

THE
Second Diſcourſe
EXAMINED.

IN this Diſcourſe to Examine ſtrictly the matters contained in it, we muſt obſerve, that after the pretext of the Title; *Shewing the two firſt Properties of the rule of Faith utterly incompetent to Scripture*; there are two general heads offered.

1. Several Preſumptions in the 8 former Sections.

2. Several exceptions pretended to be anſwered from the ninth Section to the end.

1. As to the Preſumptions, we ſhall conſider them in their order.

1. It is preſumed, that there was a clear Deſcription of the Rule of Faith given in the former Diſcourſe.

The Author muſt not be offended if we deny this, for it is a defective Explication: and let him conſider whether the other things ſuggeſted, do not more diſcover the nature, and intrinſecal properties of the rule of Faith than his. If he will join iſſue putting all together we ſhall conſent.

2. It

2. It is presumed, that there are two main Pretenders to the Claim of being the Rule of Faith. viz. *Tradition* and *Scripture*: Although the *Private Spirit*, *Private reason*, *Testimonies of Fathers &c.* May have a place in the Claim, since they are thought to give unto the respective reliers on them security of *Gods sense* in them. *Sect.* 1.

We shall accept of this Duel between *Tradition and Scripture, leaving out all Seconds or Thirds, to shorten our Controversie. But by the way, may we suppose that neither of these nakedly taken, can be the rule of Faith, and that not without the Authors concession. For in the close of the first Section, he saith, Gods sence in any of these, that is, points of Faith, is the rule of Faith; and the others obtain that name only, because they are thought to give unto the Reliers on them security of that Gods sence. If the Author will stand to his word here, we are like to put our discourses into a fair way to find out Truth. Gods sence either in Tradition or Scripture is, as we take it, Gods mind or will revealed concerning the way of Salvation, which we assert to be the only rule of Faith: Traditions Oral or Scriptural, are but helps to bring us unto this sence; therefore they can only obtain the Title of the rule of Faith Metonymically, as due means ordered and annexed to help thereunto. So that the issue is this: Gods sence, mind or will made known in Scripture,*

or Tradition is the rule of Faith only. Our buſineſs then is to try, whether his Tradition, or, *the Scripture of Truth, which we aſſert, do give to us the ſence of God.*

3. *It is* preſumed with *a Note, that they who ſay Scripture is their rule of Faith cannot mean by Scripture the ſence of it*, that is, the things to be known; for they are the very points of Faith, of which the Rule of Faith is to aſcertain us. The reſt in this ſecond Section are fruitleſs amplifications.

1. In reply to this, we deny the Authors preſumption as irrational and brutiſh, How? *Cannot they who ſay Scripture is their Rule of Faith, mean by ſcripture the ſence of it?* Why ſo? Is this Impoſſibility either *Moral*, that they cannot *de jure* or in right reaſon ſay ſo? or, *Is it natural*, that they have no wit, or ability to ſay ſo? His Jeſuitical Champions againſt Scripture, have found that they both could and did urge the Scripture ſenced by God in it ſelf, to the vanquiſhing of all the proud and blaſphemous attempts of thoſe Adverſaries againſt his word. And they had the greateſt reaſon for it and right unto it; for it is brutiſh to give a ſenceleſs Rule to men, much more to believers who live by Faith. Unhappy ſouls muſt Proteſtants be, if ſuch an Impoſſibility were laid upon them.

2. His reaſon is as forceleſs, as his Aſſertion wild, yea and croſſing to the very words

words dropt from him in the close of the former Section. There he had said; the Rule of Faith *must give Gods sence, that is, Points of Faith.* Here he saith Scripture as a *rule cannot be meant with the sence of it*, that is, *the things known by it; for those are the very points of faith*: How do these agree? *That which giveth Gods sence, even points of faith is the rule of faith*, and *scripture (which is Gods word) with its sence which are points of faith, cannot be the rule of faith.* His account is, because the rule Faith must ascertain us of the points of faith, therefore it cannot be the same. Had he said, *the means or rule to Faith* do but ascertain us of Gods mind in points of faith, which is its only *rule*, he had made a clear distinction: But the *Rule of faith* is altogether the same with *Gods sence, mind, or will*, in points of Faith revealed, which must regulate Faith in all its Actings.

3. It is a most unjust imposition of the Author upon those who *assert Scripture to be the Rule of Faith*, that they cannot mean by the word *Scripture, that book as yet senc't, or interpreted, but as to be senc't*; For in that *writing* there are none but *characters* that may have an *aptness* to signifie Gods mind. Doth the Author think the Protestants in their Assertion, do mean by *Scripture* nothing but the written character or dead letter? sure he

cannot think ſo, if he have read their defenſe for *Scriptures Right* to be the *Rule* of faith upon that account that it doth notifie really and fully the mind of God unto ſalvation: But if yet he doe think ſo, and would force them to this, that by the term of *Scripture*, there is nothing litterally carried but *written Characters*: they are not confined to his thoughts; they know Scripture or the word of God, and the will of God are convertible; and ſo they aſſert Scripture to be the Rule of Faith. Will the Diſcourſer ſuffer it, if we ſhould ſay, that he cannot mean by *Tradition-oral* which he makes the Rule of his Faith, any word ſenc't, but to be ſenc't, which were indeed *vox et præterea nihil*, a meer empty ſound? We think not; and yet we ſhall try him upon that in our progreſs with him. Let him know in the interim that we both can and will mean *Scripture the Rule* of our Faith, *ſenc't* by God himſelf immediately inſpiring, the penmen of it, when he gave it to them and by them, as well and better, than he can mean his Tradition by word of mouth ſenc't, which if it be at all will be found not to be ſenc't by God, but by the Evil one, Even that Tradition which is *meerly Popiſh*. We ſhall leave this his *Quibble* upon the notion of *Scripture*; nothing by the way, that we put a difference between the ſence of Scripture, which

which God hath given to it, and the interpretation which Man offereth, notwithstanding he confounds them in this Section. If any thing else be intended in this *Impossibility* laid on Scripture as a *Rule* of Faith, to be senc't; It must be on this account, that the Rule of Faith is supposed by him not possible to be actually senc't; And his discourse then may be summ'd up in such an Argument; *That which is the Rule of Faith cannot be actually senc't*, but *Scripture is asserted to be the Rule of Faith*, therefore *as such it cannot be actually senc't.* The Proposition in this is so fowly false, that a man of Reason cannot pretend to assert it, and then the whole argument is vain: If none of those be his meaning he must better his *note* before it be intelligible; and if in any we have but his meaning, we have also made good that Scripture actually senc't by God, and only so, is the true Rule of Faith.

4. All this presumed by the Author, he proceeds hereupon to apply his two first Properties of the Rule of Faith, *viz. Evidence of its Existence* and *Evidenceableness of its Ruling Power to all*; and to prove that they are wholly incompetent unto Scripture in *Sect.* 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, & 8.

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known, and then infer such Truths as may tend to invalidate the proofs urged by the Discourser, against it.

1. *The eternal Jehovah, God blessed for ever, who is the first and the last of all his Creatures, that framed the Spirit of Man within him, is the Onely, Eminent, and perfect Law giver unto the Sons of* Adam, *who works Faith and ruleth it in the Hearts of his, to receive Christ Jesus for Righteousness and Life, as revealed by him.* This is the Rule of Rules.

Deus ipse est Regula primò regulans.

2. *Gods will revealed in the Rectitude and Latitude of it concerning the Justification and Salvation of sinners by the Righteousness of his own Son, manifested in the flesh, obeying, suffering, dying, rising, ascending in the Flesh to the Right hand of the Father, and there making intercession for them, is the onely adequate, and perfect Rule of Faith, ruling and ordering it in all its actings upon Christ, necessary to salvation.* These the Authors dares not deny.

Heb. 1. 1. 2

3. *This will of God was committed to the Prophets, and by his own Son to the Apostles, that it might be made known to their respective Ages, and succeeding Generations, these two waies.*

1. *By Oral Tradition*, that is, by speaking, declaring and preaching of it, to their present Posterity in their respective times surviving: By this means did God ordinarily make known his will unto his people,

people, to the daies of *Moses* without any other; Onely extraordinarily God did in those daies sometimes appear to the Patriarchs, and immediately spake unto them himself.

2. *By written-Tradition*, which is *Scripture*, injoined first to *Moses*, then to the Prophets afterward by the Lord unto his Apostles, this way or means they used jointly with their preaching, which also was to continue to the worlds end. Where note, that these were but means to help unto the knowledge of the *Rule of Faith*, and the reception of it; but not the *Rule* it self; This is only the will of God revealing Christ Jesus to be the alone Foundation or Ground-work for souls to build on unto eternal life. Ex. 24. 4. Isai. 30. 8. Hab. 2 2. Mat. 28. 19. 2 Thes. 2. 2. Revel. 1. 11.

4. *This will of God made known by the Prophets and Apostles either in preaching or writing was one and the same.* This in considering and comparing the old and new Testament is most evidently apparent: So that neither did their writing add unto their Tradition, nor their Tradition to their writing; but both uttered the same will of God without the least alteration; to the Exact reception whereof the Apostle binds the Church under the penalty of *Christs Anathema*. Such an *Identity* cannot the Discourser shew between his Tradition, and the writings of the Apostles and Prophets. It will therefore be found Gal. 1. 8, 9.

found no Tradition from them, or owned by them.

2 Tim. 3. 16. Jer. 23, 28, 29. Heb. 4. 12.

5. *The whole Scripture wherein this Will is made known is inſpired, or ſpirited by God himſelf*: and ſo ſenced by him: So that it is no dead letter, but the quick and lively word of God, he breathing in it and by it; nor needs it to be ſenced by mens Tradition: Hereupon it is, that the Holy Ghoſt guiding the Pen-men of Scripture, uſeth *the Titles of Scripture and God* ſynonymouſly, As *Gal.* 3. 8. *The Scripture foreſeeing, that God would juſtifie the Heathen by Faith, preached before the Goſpel to* Abraham, *ſaying, In thee ſhall all Nations be bleſſed.* Did the Scripture *foreſee?* which is but a dead letter in the Authors account? or, *Did not God* ſpeaking in and by the *Scripture foreſee* this? Doubtleſs it was ſo; *yet Scripture* is intitled to one of the greateſt Acts of *Gods Soveraignty* even his *Providence*: God therefore is in it and breaths forth his will by it unto men. Is not this then the Rule of Faith ruled by God himſelf?

Scriptura eſt Regula regulata.] Γραφη θεοπνευστος ἐστιν ἀυτοπιστος.

6. *The Scripture hence is concluded to be worthy of Faith, and to be beleeved for its ſelf, it being Gods very breathing, and therefore deſervedly the Rule of Faith.* This was and is an Apoſtolical Principle known ſufficiently in the Church, and therefore to be beleeved by Chriſtians; and not to be proved, as if it wanted Evidence of its

its Existence: seeing it hath been ever, and uninterruptedly so received in the Church both Jewish and Christian: And to go about to shake it now, is but to kick against the pricks; The word of the Lord is such a fire, as will devour the Adversaries of it.

7. *This Hypothesis* we adde, *That both these waies and means of oral and written-Tradition for making known the will of God for salvation by Christ (which is, the onely Rule of Faith) were and are equally Evident, or Evidenceable as to their Existence to all persons whom they did or do concern.* The Truth of this is indubitable, as to those Ages and generations, wherein both those means were given together; That *speech* was *Evident*, in declaring the will of God, unto them that could *understand speech*; and that *writing* was as *Evident* a means to reveal the will of God to them, who were *capable and knew letters*, who can doubt, but he, who is resolved to beleeve nothing?

But the greatest trouble is about succeeding Generations, whether they are as equally evident to all persons concerned now, as they were then? Here it seems Scripture must depend upon Tradition for its Evidence; for what Posterity can know, this to be the Scripture, but that, to which their Fathers or Predecessors do dictate, and declare the same, and if so, Tradition *Dub.*

Tradition is more evident, giving Evidence to the very Existence of Scripture.

Sol. To remove this rub out of the way, we shall suggest these notes.

1. That both these means of bringing men unto the knowledge and Faith of Christ, were instituted by God jointly to carry on that work, and respectively to concur in their mutual help of each other for the effecting of the same: Otherwise God would not have needlesly added *Scripture* to Oral-preaching or Tradition by word of mouth.

Hos. 6. 5.
Hos. 8. 12.

2. The mutual help of these to each other is,

1. That true and faithful Tradition declareth the Scripture to be Gods true written Law or will.

2. That this Scripture doth it self demonstrate by its innate light, that the Tradition of the same mind of God contained in this writing is true: So that the *evidence of Scriptures existence* may be and is known to us by way of *Tradition*; but the *Evidence of the Being of Traditions truth*, can ordinarily be given alone from *Scriptures Testimony*. Let men judge how one Evidence can help to Faith without the other.

3. The help given by *Tradition* to Evidence Scriptures Existence, is not ment of *Popish Tradition*; For Gods Tradition

on instituted, was before either *Pope*, *Papists* or their *Tradition* were heard of in the world. And besides this since their *Tradition* hath been declared and confirmed by their *Trent-Fathers*; thereby they have made *no Scripture to be Scripture, and the lying vanities* of their own brains, to be the very will of God, which is horrid Blasphemy. Now *this Tradition* alone is that for which the Author contendeth under the general notion of *Tradition*, but he may know, we can distinguish and deny.

8. In the last place, this is the closing Hypothesis. *That the Reason of Gods command for writing his Will, which was once only delivered by speech or word of mouth, was to provide against the Evils incident unto Tradition; and to be as a Touch-stone or Rule to try True and False Tradition by it in all ages.* This is most true, for God himself calleth back straglers by *Tradition*, to *the Law, and to the Testimony to set them right.* But we suppose the Author will boggle at it, and not so easily grant it: Therefore shall we labour to clear it to mens Reasons, and Conscience: by these Considerations.

1. Consider we the evils incident to Tradition from *Adam* to Christ: The first Tradition of Gods Covenant for salvation given by himself to *Adam*, was by the old serpent corrupted in his Assault;

Hath

Gen. 7,1. *Hath God said ye shall not eate of every tree of the garden?* His wile was to make them forget Gods voice, and so he did: *Adam* delivered the same Law of sacrifice to *Cain* and *Abel*; This kept it by Faith unto the death; the other corrupted it, and slew his Brother for keeping it conscientiously: So in *Cain's* line Tradition of Gods will was falsified, however in the line of *Abel* it was for some time preserved in its Truth: So is it evident in the several lines of *Noah*, *Abraham*, &c. Unto *Moses*, that however their Fathers delivered purely Gods truth unto them by word of mouth; yet their children perverted it in giving it down; So that God complains of their unfaithfulness by *Moses* in his Age, and by the Prophets in their respective generations, that by adding, and taking away, and mingling mens Inventions with his Law they falsified his Tradition. No otherwise was it in the Gospel time of Christs manifestation in the Flesh; No sooner was the *Mysterie of Godliness* preached but *the Mysterie of Iniquity* was set on working, and the Tradition of this exceedingly obscured the Truth of Christ preached; So that by Traditionary lyars then, great obstructions were laid to the spreading of the Gospel, and the ground work also of the great Apostasie then foretold: So that *de facto* it appears that Oral-Tradition was liable

1 Tim. 3. 16.
1 Tim. 4. 1. 2. 3.
2 Thes. 7. 7. 11.

liable to great corruption; *There* was *Cause* then, why the only wise God should provide against such growing evils in his Church.

2. Consider we the provision made by God against this incroaching corruption, which was two-fold.

1. *Extraordinary*, and that was by his own frequent appearing to the *Fathers* before the Law, delivering to them his Covenant, and repeating it as necessity required, by reason of their weakness several times, unto the daies of *Moses*; which also he vouchsafed then to *Israel*, to fix his Law on their hearts; and no less as he thought fit, several waies appeared he to the Prophets to reform the abuses of corrupt Tradition in their respective times which needs no proof. Gen. 3. 4. 6, 12, 17, 26. 35. &c. Exod. 19, 20.

2. *Ordinary* Provision also did God make against the falsifying of his *Tradition*, which was his command for writing his Covenant, as he began to do somewhat of it himself, with his own finger: This copy would he have to be reserved, and laid up, both for Rulers, Priests, and People to order all their thoughts, words, and waies by it; and thereby also to distinguish between Truth and Falshood, good and evil. Exod, 24. 4. Exod. 31. 18. Deut. 10. 5. Deut. 17. 18. Jos. 1, 8.

No less upon this account did he enjoyn the Prophets in their respective times successively, to write what they preached

preached, at leaſt an abridgement of it, and lay it up for a Record to teſtifie againſt and reform ſinners who walked after the vain Traditions of their Fore-fathers. Yea further our Lord Jeſus himſelf provoked the Phariſees (who by their Tradition made the Law of God of none effect) unto the Scripture, as the great and true Witneſs of himſelf. Once more the Apoſtle by the Spirit of Chriſt giveth us the ſure account of the reaſon for writing Gods Law, it was added becauſe of Tranſgreſſion, that is, to prevent *Iſraels* warping or turning aſide to falſe waies of worſhip, by the ſuperſtitious and idolatrous Traditions of their Fathers. From all which put together it appears that it was Gods mind to have Oral-Tradition tried, rectified, and ruled by his written will, or Scripture; This then muſt be a better evidence of Truth than the word of mouth by men.

Joh. 5. 39.

Gal. 3. 19.

3. As aſſiſtent unto the former, we ſhall adde only this note, Natural Reaſon, Senſe and Experience concurre to make good this Hypotheſis: For the ſtrongeſt and moſt faithful memory of man may fail ſometimes, and therefore their ſpeeches faulter, but if the matters teſtified be written, and upon faithful Record, this will teſtifie my miſtakes in mens ſpeeches, as the Authentick Copy by which they muſt be proved. The Author there-

fore

fore who pretends to so much reason, we hope will not deny this; And if so, his Reason will guide him to yield more Honour to *Gods Scripture*, than to *Mans*.

2. These things being premised; to counterwork the Authors proofs of the Incompetency of his two first Rules unto Scripture. We shall summe up his objections shortly, and return to them orderly.

1. He urgeth, It is not evident, that the books pretended to be Gods word are indeed Scripture, or divinely inspired *S.* 3. --2. It is not evident, how many those books of Scripture are *S.* 4. --3. It is not evident, that the Original Copy of those books was preserved indeficiently entire. S. 5. --4. It is not evident that the Translations of this Original are true. S. 6. --5. It is not evident, but that the Transcribers or Printers have been careless, Knaves, or Hereticks. *S.* 7. --6. Suppose all these were clear. The true Sence of Scripture is not evident. *S.* 8. All this is hid from the Vulgar, *&c.*

Now to reply unto these, we shall from the former Truths inferre.

1, *That the Scripture as to its Existence in the book supposed, is as evident or Evidenceable to Subjects capable of knowing it: as that there is light, or that there are Colours to such as have the faculty of seeing.* And it is absurd to require that light should be evident into blind men. That

there is such a book of Scripture called the *Bible* in the world, All nations Infidel or Christian must confess, as much as they do any known books of men: but to know this to be divinely inspired belongeth only to subjects qualified, which some rude and vulgar may be, and some wise and learned of the world may not be, from whom it is hid.

1. It was evident to be Gods word, (as the Author grants) to them in whose daies it was given; So that, what was, may be still.

2. We assert Faithful Tradition, to have its proper use for making known this book to be the Scripture of God from Generation to Generation: So God ordered the Fathers to deliver his Law downward to their children, and these to their succeeding generation. Psal. 78. 5.

3. Hence also it follows, that *Scripture* which is the *written will of God* is as self evident to them who can see and read it, as the living voice of any declaring the same to them, who hear it. But to require this to be so manifest unto such vulgar, as are wilfully ignorant, or to such Doubters, who will not be resolved, or to more curious searchers, who make it their work to find out, and cavil at the seeming contradictions of Scripture is most unreasonable; for they are not subjects capable to receive that, which

which the meaneſt underſtanding diligently exerciſed therein, may and doth perceive.

2. We aſſert, *That it is no leſs Evident, or Evidenceable to Subjects capable, even the vulgar, deſiring after knowledge, that the number of books, which are the Scripture of God, is determined in the old and new Teſtament, written by the Prophets and Apoſtles.* That no more are truly *Scripture*, but ſuch as were written by the Prophets and Apoſtles, is confeſſed, not only by *Bellarmine* and other Jeſuits: but by the *Trent-Convention* it ſelf unto which the Author ſubſcribeth. It is true that all of them do father *Apocryphal books* upon the *Prophets*, which were none of theirs; but in many particulars appear to be the works of Impudent lyars. And theſe they inſert among the Scriptures of the Prophets which their ſeduced people do readily ſwallow down: But never did ſo much darkneſs from the bottomleſs pit ſo farre prevail as to hide this impoſture from the true and ſeeing witneſſes of Jeſus, but that they could diſcover it; and the light ſhining at this day muſt needs clear up theſe miſts of deluſion, if men were willing to ſee the light. However theſe proofs we ſuggeſt.

1. The Scripture of the New Teſtament (which the Author will not deny) beareth witneſs to all the Prophets, that Acts 10. 43. 1 Pet. 1. 10.

they did ſpeak and write of that ſalvation for ſinners purchaſed by Jeſus, and evidently manifeſted in the Goſpel. All which writings of *Moſes* and the Prophets are owned, as the Infallible Oracles of God, by the Spirit of Chriſt. This Evidence is ſure.

Rom. 3. 1.

2. As to the new Teſtament, the known *Titles of the Pen-men, the conſtant reception of them in the Church, and the faithful Tradition*, which God hath continued by his witneſſes from Age to Age, whoſe Authority we aſſert, do give full evidence of its Exiſtence, and ruling Power alſo over Conſciences (It containing with the reſt the will of God): So that unleſs men ſhut their eies, they may ſee clearly the *Power of God* in this Scripture inabling it to be the *Rule of Faith*. Yet we need not any Tradition deſcending from the Myſterie of Iniquity to give Teſt unto this; but do deny it, as the convoy of all Falſhood; which the Polemical diſcourſes of the Proteſtants have ſufficiently diſcovered againſt the Jeſuits. Let Readers judge.

3. We affirm, *That God the Author of the Scriptures gave the firſt and original Copies in the language known and uſed in the Church*; viz. *The old Teſtament in the Hebrew moſtly, and the new in the Greek tongue.* In theſe God ordered his Prophets and Apoſtles to preach and write unto his Church in

in their respective times; And the wisdom of God herein, would not make his Ministers to be Barbarians unto his people to whom they did preach and write. This Truth is made good by Protestant writers against that *Trent Constitution*, which maketh their *Vulgar Latin* the only *Authentick* language to correct others by it: We refer for a larger account unto themselves, yet here we shall suggest something to the Objection.

1. We accept from God, and assert, the Testimony of *Faithful Tradition* from the Prophets and Apostles continued by his good Providence thorough all succeeding Ages unto this day. Yet here also we exclude *Popish Tradition* as perniciously false, corrupting and destroying the Truth of Gods written will.

2. We reject as a most unreasonable demand, that for the just reception of the *Scripture* as the *Rule of Faith*, the vulgar in every nation must know and understand the Original languages wherein they were given; or be sure of the skill of others in the same. Was it necessary, when the Spirit fell upon the Apostles inabling them to speak the great things of God in the several languages of all the nations, then dwelling in *Jerusalem*, that they must understand Hebrew and Greek, or be perswaded of other mens skils therein, to receive the words of the Prophets urged, as

a *Rule of faith*? Was it not enough for them to receive this will of God written by the Prophets, and now revealed unto them in their native tongues, for a Rule unto their Faith? No more neceſſity is there now, that the vulgar ſhould underſtand the Originals; neither is there juſt cauſe for them to miſtruſt their Teachers who faithfully open this Scripture to them; ſeeing they offer their doctrine to be tried; and Enemies themſelves cannot juſtly gainſay it; and the very *Truth* revealed from Scripture in their *Mother Tongue*, carrieth ſelf Evidence in it to their Conſciences. This then is too frivolous, any way to impede the Scripture to be the *Rule of faith*, for the want of Evidence or Evidenceableneſs of its Exiſtent Power. The Author hath more Cauſe to find fault with his own *Tradition*, which teacheth their vulgar to worſhip God in an unknown tongue; which is both abominable to God and deſtructive to thoſe poor deluded ſouls.

4. *We* conclude, *that the ſame God, who gave the Scriptures in the firſt Copy; as he did inable his ſervants to ſpeak it in all languages: ſo doubtleſs ordered he them to write thoſe revelations of God to the nations converted in their own Languages*; which was no more, than the Tranſlations of them; whence others in ſucceſſive times attempted the ſame work for the edifying of the Church

Church, and informing others. So that it is not impossible but that the *Truth of Scripture* may be self-evident, though translated: it is not word, but matter, which is the *Rule of faith.* Yet more distinctly to return to this

1. We suppose there may be litteral mistakes in Translations, yet are these triable and corrigible by other hands; So there is a remedy: But among all none are more vilely corrupt, and justly culpable then the Authors vulgar Latin, which his Tradition upholdeth.

2. We acknowledge, that in these, that Scripture which holdeth forth the will of God to salvation, is self-Evident; and to be known.

3. We embrace *faithful Tradition*, as a good Testimony in this case also; though we refuse *Popish fables.*

4. It is unequal to require the vulgar to have skill in all Translations before they can take *Scripture as a Rule of faith*; It is enough that they receive the Truth of God from thence, by those who faithfully declare it, and believe it, because it is written. But as to the matter of Translations and their force, it is a work of a larger scope, however the Author do but touch it here to make a stumbling block; we must therefore referre to the greater works of Protestants clearing this: and note by the way that no soul hath

cauſe to be offended, either at Tranſlators or Tranſlation, when the true will of God unto Salvation is held out by them. Scripture hath its Evident Exiſtence, and evidenceable power even in Tranſlations.

5. God being the only Author and Protector of Scriptures Truth, we infer, *That the variety, weakneſs, inſufficiency and knavery of Copiers, Tranſcribers, Scribes, and Printers, cannot enervate the Evidence of Scriptures-Tradition, or incapacitate it to be the Rule of Faith.* The only *Wiſe God* hath over-ruled them all, and ſtirred up able and upright men to diſplay the hypocriſie of Hereticks; and evidence his written truth, which is evident to this day. Never were there a worſe pack of knaves, than thoſe who deſigned the *Index Expurgatorius*; and yet they have got little by their knavery. We are no whit ſtartled at this, neither hath any ſoul reaſon to be offended at the Scripture for it; For the *Myſterie of Truth and Godlines*, is too mighty for the *Myſtery of Iniquity and Falſhood*; and will prevail. We ſhall only ſay for a cloſe of this; That faith in Gods Providence, a diſcerning reception of faithful Tradition, and a diligent ſearch into the Scriptures, and ſtudying of them, will clear its evidence ſufficiently, and ſecure us from being cheated by knaves.

6. The

6. The Scripture being ſpirited by God, and ſo truly ſenced, we cloſe againſt the laſt objection. *That it is no hard taſk to be certain of the ſence of it, God having ſpoken plainly therein his mind and will as to mans ſalvation.* This teſtimony of God is ſure making wiſe the ſimple, yea his Command is pure enlightening the eies; So the Pſalmiſt ſaith, who doubtleſs (without diſparagement to him) knew the Scripture better then this Diſcourſer. As to the numerous Comments, and infinite diſputes pretended about the ſence of it, which render it no taſk for the vulgar to undertake; We ſhall only ſay, the multitude of thoſe vain words cannot darken the knowledge of God plainly exhibited therein; Yet for this trouble may we charge mainly his Jeſuitical corrupters. But yet neither they nor any other deceivers can keep the Truth of God therein from ſhining forth: His inſtance in the point of *Chriſts Divinity*, that it is obſcured by Interpreters of the Scripture is forceleſs; For however the Goſpel is hid to them, who will not ſee, and to the wiſe of this world, who will not receive the ſimplicity of his word, but rather periſh: Yet to humble ſouls no Truth is more apparent or more expreſly delivered in the Scripture, than the God-head of Chriſt. Perverſe men may make darkneſs light, and light darkneſs unto themſelves. Pſal. 19. 7. 8.

And

And lastly to his Censure that it is perfect phrenzy to deny, that to search out the sence of Scripture is not a task for the vulgar, we shall only inquire of him: Did not Christ speak to the vulgar among the rest, when he said, Search the Scriptures, they are they which testifie of me? Did he not therein propose the *Rule* of Faith to them, as a task or work fit for them to undertake? or was Christ phrantick when he layeth such a task upon every one that would be saved, or is capable of it? Of such phrenzy we are not afraid to be by this Discourser charged as guilty. And now having thus sifted the first general part of this Discourse consisting of his Presumptions about, and his Objections against the Scripture; We propose it to ingenious Readers to Judge, What hath he said more in this Controversie against the Scripture, than the Subtilest Jesuits have said before him? Who have been answered sufficiently by the Truth it self. Or what he proved against the Evidence of Scriptures Existence, or the Evidenceableness of its power to be the Rule of Faith? Only he hath set up a man of straw to fight against it; He disputes against Scriptures letter without its sence to be the Rule of Faith, which never any Protestant maintained. Let him glory in his victory, It is enough that his design is so farre seen.

2. In

2. In the other general Head of this Discourse, he proposeth several Exceptions that may be alledged against his objections, and therein seeks to solve them or take them off. It is requisite, that we consider, how he dischargeth himself in this also, and to animadvert what is just upon the same.

1. He alledgeth as urged by Protestants.

1. That, *the defects* pretended in Scripture by him in his former objections *may be provided against by skill in history.* 1 History.

Whereunto we shortly reply.

1. That the defects charged on Scripture by him are Causeless, and therefore need not to be supplyed by History.

2. We deny not true History the Authority of an Humane Testimony to matter of Truth.

3. The Authors *Tradition* needs the help of History more than Scripture; for it is humane at best, and therefore mans Testimony must support it; nay and in most things is false too, and therefore such Historians will serve them best, that had nothing but bare *Hear-say* for what they wrote.

2. He excepts if History must provide, then all that take Scripture for their Rule of Faith must be skilled in Histories: Now few of the unlearned vulgar, nor of the middle sort of prudent men, nay of very good Schollars are able to judge of points in History; Then their faith is not rational or virtuous, but an

an *hair-braind* opinionative rashness but upon principles whereof they can make no judgment. *Section. 9.*

To all which we say.

1. There is no such need of skill in variety of Histories; The Scripture is self-evident as to saving Truth; and it is enough for all to be skill'd in the Sacred history of God, given by his Prophets, to bring to Faith unto salvation: Learned and unlearned ought to get skill herein if they be saved.

2. Faith built hereupon is rational and virtuous working by love, obedience unto God, and no hair-braind Opinionative rashness.

3. Whatever help Protestants may crave from Histories of men as to Consent, the Author must know, they take not them for *Principles* to build their faith upon, they know better. The Author might then have spared this historical Allegation; for it hurts not our Cause; souls may be true Beleevers, and yet no Historians.

2 Providence.

2. He brings in some replying (as he saith) of necessity, and not willingly, even what their Judgments flowing from their Principles would not, *That God assists his Church, and therefore his Providence* will *take care* that *the Contingencies* whereunto the *Scriptures* letter, their *Rule of Faith, is subject to, shall be avoided.*

We

We shall be plain in our return to this passage.

1. It is a slander that Protestants principles do influence their Judgments so as that they are not willing, but are necessitated to grant, *That God assists his Church, and that his providence secureth the Scripture both in the letter and sence of it.* We acknowledge Gods special Providence, daily to assist his own Church, and powerful to preserve his Scripture unto this day; and we blesse him with our souls, *because he hath magnified his word above all his name.* Psal. 138. 2.

2. We deny yet, that *Scriptures Letter without its sence is our Rule of Faith*, though the Discourser would fasten it upon us throughout; *It is a Rudiment* remotely helping to it, as *speech is*: but not the Rule of Faith it self, as we have before stated.

3. Yet we acknowledge; Protestants do deny Gods Assistance to the *Popish Church*, as being *none of his*, but *false* and *Adulterate*, however the *Discourser* means no Church else, thorough his whole Treatise: But we espie his drift.

He asks then, how we are certain in our way of such an Assistance.

We answer,

1. We are of the Church, and true Body of Christ while by Faith we are uni ed to him as the Head.

2. We

Mar. 16. 18. Joh. 16. 13.

2. We have many very great and precious promiſes in this Scripture, (which he cannot deny to be the word of God) and theſe ſecure us being beleeved by us, both of Gods Aſſiſtance, and his Providence preſerving his written will unto us.

He demands again, that we muſt make our *Rule in Scripture Certain*, before we mention Faith, Church or Gods Aſſiſtance. For the Rule of Faith is the means to bring to it, and this muſt be certain Antecedently, to the Notions of *Faith*, *Faithful* or *Church*, *Sect.* 10.

We grant his demand, and therefore ſay.

1. God himſelf hath given Teſtimony to the certainty of Scriptures *Truth*, which makes it the *Rule of Faith*, by commanding his will to be written.

2. The letter of this Scripture is but a means unto, not a *Rule* of Faith; and by hearing and reading the ſame we come to know the *will of God*, which *is the Rule of Faith.*

3. It is ſtrange, that here the *Diſcourſer* aſſerts, that the *Rule of Faith* muſt be Antecedent to the notion of *Faith*, and that alſo, to the notion of Faithful or the Church; Elſe where he ſaith, upon the Account of his Tradition, that the Church muſt precede this Tradition, and this *foregoe* Faith, he rings the changes: but we freely grant, the Rule of Faith from heaven

ven doth precede all; yea and the means to faith muſt go before its effect, yea and the *Rule* muſt prove the *Church*, not the *Church the Rule*.

4. We conclude, that by Faith in this *Gods-Scripture-Rule*, we are gathered into Fellowſhip with the Father, Son, and Spirit, with the Apoſtles and Saints of God, and ſo are of his Church; neither need we the help of the Authors Tradition, *Faith*, or *Church*, to ſecure us further: We are ſure being built upon that Rock, from whence neither he, nor the Powers of Darkneſs can remove us. Let him look to his own footing.

3. He pretends, that ſome do urge, the *Teſtimonies of Councils*, or *Fathers*, to be *ſufficient Interpreters of Scripture*, and ſo they make up the defects objected by him.

We ſhall firſt return to this paſſage, and explicate the Proteſtants allegation of Councils and Fathers in this Caſe.

1. They do honour Councils and Fathers which are ſuch indeed; and they are ſuch only who honour God, and ſubject their determinations unto his written will: And in this point we aſſert that Article of the Church of *England* concerning this matter. Scripture makes Councils and Fathers ſuch as God will own; They make not Scripture either in letter or Sence.

2. They pin not their *Faith* upon either of theſe, as if they gave them their *Rule*

Rule for believing, but acknowledge the grace of God given unto them, if they open rightly *Scripture Rule*, and interpret the mind of God therein, and upon that account thank God for them.

In the next place, from this supposed Allegation, the Discourser draweth some Consequents, which we shall weigh.

1. That if the Allegation be true, then none can be *capable* of the *Rule of Faith*, nor of Faith it self, but those who are read in Councils and Fathers.

Unto this shortly we say,

1. Let this absurdity-consequent be laid upon them; who so make the Allegation, as he represents it, which no sound Protestant will do.

2. We deny this Consequence from the explication premised; Christians are true Believers by knowing Scriptures, and not Councils nor Fathers. *Believe his Prophets and ye shall prosper.* 2 Chron. 20. 20.

2. He inferreth if the Councils and Fathers help the Rule of Faith, they must be accounted *Infallible*, which (he saith) none, but Catholicks, that is, *Romish* or *Pseudo-Catholicks* will say: or else they must urge some other infallible guide to interpret the Scriptures by.

Hereunto also we reply.

1. Let them who alledge Councils to the purpose pretended, fence off this Consequence, we know none such.

2. We

2. We deny Councils and Fathers to be infallible; no true Catholicks will grant it, though false ones do: That Council of the Apostles only was such, who could truly say, it seemeth good to the Holy Ghost and us: All successive were good, as farre as they walked by the same Rule, but none infallible: neither did any of them ever pretend to be so: Only spurious Conventions, have dared to arrogate the spirits presence, when the Devil himself acted them in decreeing against Gods written truth.

3. We assert God the best interpreter of himself, and so his Scripture of it self; It is a light and a lamp to them that walk thereby in the way unto Salvation: To this infallible guide Gods spirit in his word we adhere.

3. The last fault he finds about the former Allegation, is concerning the notions of *Fathers, Councils, Church and rule of Faith*, and their order. A *Father*, he saith, is an eminent and known witnesser to Posterity of the sence and Faith of the *Church*: The *Church* is a notion presupposed to a *Father*: A Council is a *representative of the Church*, and a *right Council of the true Church*, which he meaneth Romish and Popish only. *Council* therefore and *Father* presuppose *Church*, and *Church* presupposeth *Faithful*, and *Faithful* presupposeth *Faith*, *and Faith the rule of Faith*: In vain then do they strive

to piece out the sufficiency of Scriptures letter, to be the Rule of Faith by these helps, seeing that *Rule* must give being to all these *S.* 11.

Unto this plainly we return.

1. As to the Notions and order of *rule of Faith, Faith, Faithful, Church, Councils and Fathers* we will not contend with him, if they be understood genuinely, and exclusively to Popish notions of all those things.

2, We assert also, that our *rule of Faith* which is the will of God revealed in *Scripture*, must foregoe *Faith*, Faithful, Church and every member or part appertaining thereunto, for it doth give being to all.

3. Let them therefore, who strive to piece out the sufficiency of Scriptures letter to be the Rule of Faith, by the help of *Councils* and *Fathers*, lye under the blame which the Author casts upon them: We are not concerned, nor any of the Protestant Churches in this matter.

4. In the close of this we shall animadvert; that here he speaketh to his own case, as much as ours, that his *rule of faith* which is *Oral-Tradition foregoeth faith, Faithful, Church, &c.* And yet elsewhere, *Church* must foregoe the *Tradition*, and one mouth must deliver it to another, is not this to run in a ring, and to be a circular Discourser? *Viderit ipse.*

4. The

4. The last Exception against his Objections he saith is, some reply that *Fundamentals are clear in Scripture*, which may be enough to evidence it to be the *Rule of Faith.*

This also we affirm in the Apostles words that the household of God are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; and all this is revealed in their writings by the Lord. It is therefore clear in Scripture.

Yet he objects to this.

1. That by sufficient Authority a certain Catalogue of Fundamentals, was never given or agreed unto: And the discourse grows tickliſh when we talk of Fundamentals, and hazardous upon the mistake of one to ruine all.

Whereunto we shall only say.

1. That Gods Authority is all-sufficient to lay the Fundamentals of salvation, which he hath done in the Scriptures of the Prophets and Apostles.

2. That the *foundation* or the *fundamental ground* of mans Salvation is but *one*, the Catalogue then is soon made: *other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.* Understand we this either of the *foundation personal*, which is the person of Christ, upon which the persons of beleevers are built as living stones to make an house for God; This is but 1 Cor. 3. 11.

one: Or if we take it for the *foundation Doctrinal*, it is but that one saving truth, that by his name alone can salvation be obtained: Or if it be looked on as a *foundation practical*, that is as Christ is laid an Example to us, that we should walk as he walked; All this is but one, and this most plainly, evidently, and expresly laid down in the Scripture of God: So that this is no tickliſh nor dangerous matter to treat upon, as the Diſcourſer ſuggeſts. As to other ſubordinate *Truths* naturally deduced from this, how few or many ſoever they be, they may be called ſecondarily Fundamentals; neither can it be hazardous to the end of Faith, that is, mans ſalvation to treat ſolidly of them. We may then ſay ſafely, Fundamentals are clear in Scripture to them who will ſee.

1 Cor. 3. 11. Act. 4 12.

2. He expoſtulates, Is it in a fundamental, that Chriſt is God? if ſo, he asks again whether this be clearer in Scripture, than that God hath hands, feet, noſtrils, and paſſions like ours? Seeing then that this latter point is certain to lead vulgar heads into exceeding great errors, and that Hereſies are as ſeemingly clear in the outward Face of Scripture as Fundamental Truths, how miſtaken a principle do they rely upon for the main hinge of their ſalvation, who ſay that Fundamentals are ſo clear in Scriptures letter to every Capacity? S. 12.

To

To solve all this difficulty.

1. To the former question we answer roundly, it is *the Fundamental*, that *Christ is God*; For otherwise he could not be our Saviour: He is indeed *Jehovah* our Righteousness: This is our Rock. Isa. 45. 22. Jer. 23. 6.

2. To the next question we say it imports a *fallacie* under a double sence: For, if the meaning be, whether in Scripture when we read, *God said to have hands* &c. be not as clear, as that *Christ* is said to be *God*; we easily grant it. But if it be inquired whether that proposition, *God* hath hands, *&c.* be in Scriptures sence as clear, as *that Christ is God*. This we deny, for this latter is a Proposition consisting of proper terms, God is properly attributed to Christ; but the former is a Proposition figurative, when hands, feet, *&c.* are attributed unto God; and therefore is not so clear to be understood, without turning the Metaphors into proper terms, which is no hard matter for common understandings to do; when they know God speaks of himself after the manner of men, not to debase God, but to help us in our way to conceive his Providence and mighty works competent to God, by eies and hands which men use. He that knoweth God to be a spirit, cannot by these figurative expressions be led into such Errors as the Discourser doth pretend.

3. We conclude therefore that his inference is falſe; Scripture upon this account is no miſtaken Principle to rely upon for our ſalvation; but the ſureſt word of Truth to cauſe Chriſt the day ſtarre to ariſe in our hearts; And he is the Author of Eternal Salvation. Here is our ſure-footing ſtill, and unſhaken ſtanding.

THE
Third Diſcourſe
EXAMINED.

IN this Diſcourſe the Attempt is to prove the three following Properties of the Rule of Faith, utterly incompetent to Scripture; we ſhall keep along with him, and try his ſteps herein.

1. He layeth down his third property of the Rule of Faith, which he laboureth to prove inconſiſtent with Scripture; and for the more clear proceeding, we ſhall form it to this Argument.

That which is the Rule of Faith, muſt have in it an Aptneſs to ſettle and juſtifie theſe unlearned perſons who rely undoubtingly upon it, but, *the Scripture hath not in it ſuch an aptneſs to ſettle and juſtifie ſuch perſons, unlearned and*

and undoubtingly relying thereon. This property is not competent unto it. The Propoſition is in the firſt Section, and the Aſſumption in the ſecond.

Having the argument in this form, we ſhall try the premiſſes, and then judge of the concluſion, 1. As to the propoſition.

1. The Subject herein is the *Rule of Faith*, the main point in hand.

2. The Attribute is the *Property* ſpoken of it, *Aptneſs to ſettle and juſtifie thoſe unlearned perſons, who rely undoubtedly on it.*

3. The connection between theſe is neceſſary; This *Rule muſt* have this property. Now before we affirm or deny, it is needful to diſtinguiſh about the *juſtifying and ſettling power* of the Rule.

1. It may reſpect the way of believing (which the Diſcourſer paſſeth over,) that it muſt *juſtifie Faith* to be *the way of life.*

2. It doth reſpect perſons rulable by it, whom here he only mentions, to be *unlearned* perſons, *relying undoubtingly* upon it; who are to be diſtinguiſhed alſo.

1. *Unlearned* may be underſtood, either *abſolutely and ſimply* ſuch, who are meer ſots; or *comparatively* ſuch; who though *unlearned* in reſpect of men more skilful; yet have a reaſonable underſtanding exerciſed according to their capacity for apprehending the will of God as revealed in the Scripture.

2. *Undoubtedly relying*, may note, either ſouls fooliſhly *preſumptuous*, or elſe through faith *beleevingly confident*, and regularly walking thereby: Hence we thus determine.

1. It is a neceſſary property for the Rule of Faith to juſtifie the way of believing, and thoſe that are not much learned, yet beleevingly confident and undoubtingly relying on it, yea and to ſettle them while regularly walking by it. The propoſition thus ſtated we grant. *The Rule of Faith* muſt have ſuch an aptneſs to juſtifie and ſettle theſe.

2. If this be meant of ſuch unlearned ones, as are groſſely ignorant, rude, and ſottiſh pretenders to the *Rule of Faith* and yet preſumptuouſly undoubting thereupon; we utterly deny the Propoſition, *The Rule* of Faith hath no ſuch property as an aptneſs to juſtifie or ſettle ſuch perſons in their groſſe ignorance, preſumptuous confidence, and irregular walking in their profeſſion of the ſame. In this ſence we put the Author to the proofe of this propoſition. *No Rule is bound to juſtifie irregularities in any.*

2. The Propoſition being granted in the former ſence, we deny the Aſſumption that the *Scripture hath not ſuch an aptneſs to juſtifie and ſettle men*; and aſſert, that the *Scripture is moſt apt* to ſettle and juſtifie in their way ſuch perſons, who

though

though not so learned, yet in faith undoubtingly rely upon it, and labour regularly to walk by it. So indeed a *Rule* must justifie such as are *rulable* by it.

Now to make good this upon Scriptures Rule, we shall resume that undeniable Principle, *all Scripture is inspired or spirited by God*; Whence we inferre these proofs.

1. The *All-sufficiency of Gods wisdome is most apt* to settle and justifie all souls beleevingly relying on it: but the Scriptures contains and reveals the All-sufficient wisedom of God, so that they are able to make souls wise unto salvation, therefore is the Scripture most apt to justifie and settle learned and unlearned persons, that rely on it. 2 Tim. 3, 15. 16.

2. *The Infallibility and immutability of God is most apt to settle and justifie* all *persons of all sorts* beleevingly relying on them. *But the Scripture hath the Infallibility, and immutability of God revealed* in it, and annexed to it; therefore, is it most apt to settle and justifie all persons undoubtingly by Faith relying on it. Gods word and oath are in the Scripture, and they are most apt to give souls the best settlement. Heb. 6. 17, 18.

3. *The Holines, Rectitude, and Purity of God, is most apt to settle and justifie Souls* in their *relying on it. But the Scripture, is full of that Holiness of God, it is his holy word,* Psal. 119. 140.

word, therefore is it most apt to settle and justifie souls faithfully relying on it, and walking regularly by it. Thus far for making good the denial of the Assumption, and of our Assertion for Scriptures Aptness to settle and justifie souls depending on it, which we hope will appear forceable to right reason. Now is it our work to disprove the Authors reasoning against Scriptures fitness, as he giveth it in the second section.

1. It is suggested, No man is justifiable for assent or practise of any thing, of which either by *common-sense* or some *Reflexion* they cannot take to be true; but these unlearned persons proceeding undoubtingly, have no occasion to *reflect*, nothing then can justifie them, but Principles of *Common-sense*; but by this they have no self-assurance of *Scriptures letter, being utterly ignorant, when it was writ, by whom, how brought down, &c.*

We reply,

1. Scriptures letter is not our Rule, that can justifie any without its sence; upon which false ground he still proceeds.

2. None ought to be so unlearned as to be utterly ignorant of the Scriptures to be Gods word, it having been alwaies a Principle received in the Church; nor undoubtingly to proceed upon such ignorance in their presumptions.

3. They

3. They that know not letters, nor can read the *letter of Scripture*, yet may know the *sence and meaning* of God in it savingly, being taught by sound Apostolical Tradition, not Popish delusion.

4. It is not necessary for their justification that they must know, when and by whom the Scriptures letter was writ: If they receive Gods revelation therein beleevingly, (which by the light of nature only they cannot do, but with the help of the spirit) and walk regularly thereby, God by his Scripture will justifie them. But for grosly ignorant, and presumptuous ones who do not attain to Scriptures Rule but abuse it; The Rule cannot justifie but condemn them.

2. He suggesteth this, to invalidate Scriptures aptness to justifie its followers; That these unlearned, and undoubting Ones, may depend upon the *great schollarship* of their *teachers*; of which notwithstanding they can have no more knowledge but what sensation by eies and ears can help them, which cannot judge of such high skills: not so much as it doth of *Tradesmen* or *Artists*, by seeing their works. Neither can their uncultivated Reason give them knowledge this way of the goodness of Christian Doctrine; and its proportion unto bliss

Now what is all this to weaken Scriptures aptness for justifying its Followers.

1. Sup-

1. Suppoſe theſe unlearned do depend upon their Teachers abilities, and honeſty.

2. That they have nothing but ſenſation by eies and ears to judge of them, and an uncultivated reaſon uncapable of ſuch ſkills pretended by their Teachers. The proper iſſue muſt be, that they make this skill of their leaders to be their Rule, which cannot juſtifie thoſe, who know not, what thoſe skills do mean, and yet depend upon them. Theſe may be more to blame, than thoſe who truſt Artiſts, when they ſee their work. But herein the *Diſcourſer*, as well as elſewhere ſeems to make Chriſtian Religion too much like a *Mechanical Trade* to be hammered out by ſenſation, which yet is known in the Church to be of a Higher Extract and to be taught from heaven though entertained and helpt on to practiſe by ſenſe and reaſon. In ſumme, all the hurt intended muſt fall upon the Teachers skill, and the Diſciples ignorance, the Scripture of God cannot juſtly be blamed here. Put we this caſe; the Beræans heard the Apoſtle preach, and were convinced of the Truth of Jeſus, and received it; Yet they had no cogniſance of *Pauls* skill and learning further than as he opened the Scriptures unto them; and having heard, they ſearched daily the Scriptures, whether matters were ſo as he had taught, and finding

Act 17.11.

finding them concordant thereunto, they received the word with all readineſs of mind; whereby they were not only juſtified but commended to be noble ſouls above many. Had they depended upon mans skill, they might have been condemned. Let the Author look into this glaſs, and condemn his unlearned fooliſh ones, but juſtifie the Scriptures of God, which juſtifieth beleevers in it ſelf.

3. His main ſuggeſtion is, that many Profeſſions pretending to Scripture, differ, damn, condemn and perhaps perſecute one another; Now theſe vulgar, unlearned ones being unable to judge which is moſt to be truſted, their ſenſe brings them to an inextricable blunder; They have ſo much reaſon, which tells them there is but *one Truth*; but theſe honeſt Schollars of down-right Nature, and of her loweſt form, being unable to judge which truly follow the Scriptures letter, cannot be juſtifiable by Scripture for following it under any party. Therefore it muſt be meerly for *want of Light* or evidence in the Directive Power of the Rule. This properly then is not competent to Scriptures letter.

We contend not for Scriptures letter, without its ſence or ſpirit, which we muſt urge as often as the Diſcourſer argueth againſt the letter only. But to this main ſtumbling block, that we may remove it; we ſhall reply in theſe particulars.

1. It

1. It is to be granted and lamented, that there have been and are so many differences among Christians professing faith in the Scriptures of God both about the letter and sence of it, but this is no just cause for men to be offended at Gods word, any more then at the *Eternal word* himself; about whom the thoughts of mens hearts were not only various but contradicting each other: Yet this variety and contradiction is known not to be as great or greater than these among his own Sects about his *Traditionary Rule* of Faith; but we stay not upon this recrimination.

2. The dissentions of Professors about *Scripture*, or about *Christ* himself, argue not *want of light* in the *one*, or in the *other*: For the Son of God revealed in them is the *light* of the world unto salvation; but they may note blindness in them who so much differ thorough unbelief, ignorance, and perverseness: who are no more fit to discourse of the things of God, than blind men of Colours: and we suppose no seeing man will be offended, if they differ in their judgments, who cannot sensibly know them, and believe his own senses.

3. These honest Schollars of downright Nature, and of her lower Form; seeing they have so much reason (so the Discourser grants) as will tell them there is but

but one Truth in the Scripture, may poſſibly imploy both their ſenſations and reaſonings to know the meaning of God therein concerning the way of his ſalvation, and hold it it faſt, yea and get heaven by it alſo, notwithſtanding the differences among learned men diſputing about the letter in ſeveral particulars. It was the confeſſion of that good Father; The unlearned ariſe, and take heaven by violence, whileſt learned men are diſputing thereabout. And in doing this, the Scripture both can and will juſtifie them walking by this Rule.

4. But we have Cauſe to fear, that theſe honeſt Schollars of Nature, are but ſome of the Authors making, who continue groſſely ignorant, and preſumptuous; and are feigned by him to put off their own ignorance and maintain their own confidence upon the obſcurity of Scriptures letter, and their hear-ſay of its being the Rule of Faith: of whom we thus determine, that the Rule of Faith is not bound to juſtifie ſuch irregular Profeſſors of it. The Diſcourſer then may juſtly lay the ſin upon his Schollars, they deſerve it; but moſt wickedly doth he thence charge defect of Light or Evidence, or Power of juſtifying its followers upon the Scripture.

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2. In the third Section, he attempts to prove his fourth Property of the Rule of

of Faith incompetent unto Scripture; His Arguments runs thus.——*The Rule of Faith must be apt of its own nature to satisfie the most Sceptical Dissenters, and rational Doubters, that the Doctrine it holds forth came from Christ.* But, *The Scripture is not able so to satisfie of its own nature the most Sceptical Dissenters*, &c. Therefore, *This cannot be the Rule of Faith.*

1. Unto this, we say; It is needful to open terms, before any thing can justly be denied or granted: The greatest difficulty is about the *Subject*, to whom the satisfaction must be given: The Discourser calls them Sceptical Dissenters, and Rational Doubters; whom he describes to be *Thoughtful men*, calling *things to a strict account, before they yield over their Assent*; Therefore nothing less than a demonstration can bind those Active volatile souls from hovering in doubts, when their Eternal good is concerned. We must ask him before we proceed. Are these rational Doubters within the Church, or without it: If within Scripture, Arguments are fit to use to them; But if without, they are Infidels uncapable of Scripture reasonings; *These* Scepticks among Naturalists are professed Enemies to knowledge, and will not yield to Scientifical *Mediums*, neither will demonstrations though Divine satisfie them: And in truth as the Apostle stiles them, they are *wicked*,

wicked, *absurd, unreasonable men, having no Faith*: These then are no Subjects rulable by the Rule of Faith, and therefore is it not proper to the Rule to satisfie them. Hence then in this sence we deny the Proposition as untrue. Yet if it be meant of rational Doubters indeed within the Church and not Heretical Apostates, The Scripture is fully able to satisfie their doubts about the doctrine of Christ; and in this sence we grant the Proposition, and deny the Assumption: And this must rest upon proof. 2 Thes. 3 2

2. We still distinguish between the *Rule of Faith* which only concerns them under it; and the *Means to Faith* which respecteth others. Now to satisfie these Scepticks; Other Arguments must be made use of to perswade them of the necessity of the doctrine of Christ and Truth of it, *before* Scripture Authority is imposed on them, such the Apostle useth to the *Athenians* and *Roman Gentiles* convincing them by their own light of their own lost condition; and the necessity of seeking righteousness in another unto salvation. If these prevail, then Scripture-Revelation will be effectual to convince of this Righteousness to be had in Christ Jesus; as some of those Dissenters found. Acts 17. Rom. 1.

3. To discharge this objection, in those captious suggestions about indeavouring to demonstrate to these *Scepticks* the in-

ſpiration of Scriptures letter, reconciling ſeeming contradictions, ſtating number of books, Original, Tranſlations to be true, and the ſence of them to be ſure, (as urged Sect. 3.) Yet theſe perſons are left in ſuſpence, with a *why might it not be otherwiſe?* ſmiling at their indeavours, who labour by theſe to perſwade them to the Rule of Scriptures letter: We ſhall diſtinctly give anſwer in theſe *P.*

1. Excepting ſtill, that we urge not Scriptures letter unſenced upon any as the Rule of Faith, we ſay, it is incongruous, in winning theſe *gentile wits* to the Doctrine of Chriſt, to begin with Scripture demonſtrations towards them; It is likely they will ſmile at ſuch Indeavours, and abide ſtill in ſuſpence about it. The proper work with them is to convince them of their ſinfulneſs, brutiſhneſs, and ignorance of the way of ſalvation by ſuch Principles as the light of nature muſt grant; though being clouded with luſt in ſome it will not. If by this means theſe perſons may be ſhamed and humbled, and taken off from their proud conceits in vilifying the Revelation of God, then may Scripture demonſtration ſomewhat prevail, and ſatisfie: but if men be perverſe, they will flout at the ſtrongeſt reaſon, ſo ſome of the *Athenians* did at *Pauls* diſcourſe. But all this concerns only the means of bringing men to the Faith, which is no Rule of it.

2. The

2. The Rule of Faith is in correlation with those who are ruled by it; therefore it is just that it should be able to satisfie the reasonable doubts of them, who profess to be ruled by it: but is it therefore to satisfie the sophistical ventilations of Sceptical dissenters from it? As good reason is it, that the Carpenters Rule should direct and satisfie the Apothecary in ordering his Medicines. If the natural man cannot discern spiritual things (such as is the Rule of Faith) much less can or will those Opinionative dissenting Scepticks discern or entertain them. Is God bound to satisfie these? no more is his Scripture. 1 Cor. 2. 14.

3. Let the Subjects in this Case be stated capable of satisfaction from the Rule of faith, that is, such believers, as may be apt to doubt of the doctrine of Christ from weakness and not from wickedness, the Scripture is most able to satisfie all their hæsitations and doubts, and as containing the sum of the Covenant of grace, is set up purposely to resolve and drive out all doubts concerning Christ. So the Apostle determineth. Say not in thine heart, who shall ascend into heaven, that is, to bring down Christ, &c. It is as if he had said, doubt not, reason not doubtingly in your spirit about Christ. The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and heart, that is, the word of faith, which Rom. 10. 6, 7, 8, 9.

we preach, and now I write of unto you, *&c.* This is your satisfying and settling Rule. Whence we conclude, it is no such wearisome or tedious way to be satisfied of doubts by the Scripture to them, who humbly seek it: but that it is easily victorious by reason of its certainty and infallibility over the shock of doubts, and assaults of intellectual fears. In this, Scripture both in the letter and spirit of it, is not defective, but compleat; therefore by this property also is it the Rule of Faith.

3. In the fourth Section he undertakes to prove the fifth Property, which he assigned to the Rule of Faith, to be incompetent to Scripture. His arguing must be thus. *The Rule of Faith must be Convictive of the most obstinate and acute Adversaries to it.* But, *The Scriptures letter is not so.* Therefore, It cannot be the Rule, *&c.* The Proposition is taken for granted by the Discourser and the Assumption only he indeavours to make good to the end of this discourse in all the sections following.

Before we deny or grant, or disprove any of his Objections we must examine terms.

1. In the proposition, the *Affection* attributed to the *Rule of Faith*, is to be *Convictive*, which term may be understood of *Convictive Virtually*, or *Convictive actually*.

2. These

2. These *Adversaries* are considerable, whether they be in the Church or out of it; For this Discourser argueth also against Scripture, and yet he takes himself to be in the Church.

3. The Scriptures letter we admit not without its sence, which still he obtrudes upon us. Now these considered, we say.

1. That the Rule of Faith must have Convictive Power to answer all Adversaries against it; So we grant the Proposition.

2. That the Rule of Faith is not bound *de Facto* to be Convictive of such obstinate and acute Adversaries; So we deny it.

3. That the Scripture in the Letter and sence of it, is all-sufficient to convince all reason though obstinately adverse to it of the way of Gods salvation by his Christ. For the reason of it is strong, even Almighty, and the Truth of it infallible; why then should it not convince?

4. That it is perverseness in the Discourser to require this in Scriptures-letter unsenced; We assert Scripture fully: and hereupon deny his Assumption; We shall try his proof.

1. He brings in the Adversary personated under the Notion of a *Deist* making his objections. He imagins some Text of Scripture quoted to convince him of some point, (suppose) of Faith. He asks how you are

sure that it is the word of God? You alledge the Excellencies of it: And the *Discourser* indeed doth grant it, so farre, that eies enlightened by true Faith, may discern something in it above nature, and cry *Digitus Dei est hic*: But this *Deist* will answer that many parts of this book of God, are indeed very excellently good; but that the Devil can transform himself into an Angel of Light, and therefore, it may be his book, as well as Gods. This is the scope of the objection to bring the Scriptures into suspicion, that it may be the Devils book and not Gods; and so all the Excellencies of it to be the Issues of the Father of lies.

Unto this we reply

1. That it is a most odious suggestion, which he being a Professed Christian; puts into the mouth of his *Deist*, (that otherwise might never have entred into his thoughts) that the Devil should be the Author of Scripture; Just like him, who speaking of the Souldiers delusive Apologie, that his disciples stole Christ away while they slept, (insused into them by large hire from the Rulers to obscure Christs Resurrection) said, What fools were they? could not they have said rather, that the Devil had taken him away? This might have salved themselves, and put the Assertours of his Resurrection to a farther trouble of proving it: And so the *Speaker* left it. No less doth

doth this *Discourser* in favour to the Scripture of God, make this objection, and so leave it. Yet we shall not leave him so in this case; but return as the Lord Jesus, the *Eternal word* of the Father unto the Pharisees, when they charged him to cast out Devils by the Prince of Devils; If Satan cast out Satan he is divided against himself; How shall then his Kingdome stand? So if the Devil should abet the word of Scripture, which is the Power of God set up to destroy his Kingdome in the world; he must needs be the subverter of his own Kingdome. No just cause therefore is there to object that the Devil, as transforming himself into an Angel of light, might be the Author of Scriptures Excellencies; for it is the bane of his Kingdome. Mat. 12. 26.

2. We may inquire into this new named Person the *Deist*, stiled before the most obstinate and acute Adversary; who and what he is? Whether a subject, fit for the Rule of Faith to deal withall? The notion seems to hint a person who grants a *God*, that is *in Abstracto*; That there is such a *First Being* called *God*; and this is all, but denieth him in *Concreto*, that is, to be *such a One* as he hath revealed himself to be in *word and works*: which in Gods account is a meer Atheist, who acknowledgeth not God to be such as in his Covenant he hath made known him- Ephes. 12.

ſelf to be. *The Rule of Faith* hath nothing to do with theſe men as a *Rule*; For they reject it. Theſe have need of means and arguments proper to them to bring them unto the Faith of the Scripture, before this be preſſed on them, as a *Rule* to command them.

3. It is no impeachment of the Scriptures Excellency and convictive power; though blind men ſee it not, and perverſe men will not be convinced by it: If the Goſpel be hid, it is hid to them who are loſt, and they periſh by their wilful and obſtinate blindneſs: God and his word are juſtified in this caſe. And though they will not acknowledge Gods power in his word revealed, yet they will confeſs in the ſad iſſue of unbelief, *Digitus Dei eſt hic*. The hand of Gods vengeance is hence come upon them.

2 Cor. 4. 3.

2. He makes his *Deiſt* to requite the Excellencies of Scripture with many ſtrange *Abſurdities*, and *Hereſies* (as he ſaith) by the *Proteſtants* own confeſſion, lying in the open letter of Scripture moſt unworthy of God, as that he hath hands, *&c.* He finds Texts againſt acknowledged Science, and reckons up a multitude of Contradictions therein, which are ſuch in their own Judgment, *&c.* In reply to this paſſage.

1. if any Proteſtant have confeſſed, or be of that Judgment, That *ſtrange abſurdities, and Hereſies, that any thing againſt true Science acknowledged*, or *that contradictions*

dictions lye in the open letter of Scripture inſpired of God, he had need correct his Judgment, and explain his confeſſion. It's true, that *Abſurd, Heretical, and Perverſe* diſputers have by their ſences made *abſurdities, and hereſies, and contradictions*, in the letter of Scripture, but God delivered no ſuch things in that written letter, unworthy of himſelf however he hath condeſcended to ſpeak to us of himſelf after the manner of men: His ſence is written in the letter with the Sun-beam, though blind men ſee it not. What though thoſe *ſottiſh, carnal Anthropomorphits*, reading ſuch paſſages in Scripture, where *hands, eies, noſtrils, love, Anger and paſſions*, are ſpoken of God, do fooliſhly phanſie him, as a *Man*? Doth this conclude againſt Scripture, as if it taught men to think ſo of God? or doth it not condemn the beaſtlineſs of men ſo to abuſe Scripture and *Metamorphoſe* God into a *Man*? We know *Eies and Ears &c.* are *figurative and metaphorical* expreſſions of the *Providence and Government of God* in the world; and the ſence of figures is the proper meaning of any thing which they repreſent. It were good that the Diſcourſer would perſwade his *Deiſt* (who perhaps is himſelf,) to be more reaſonable in arguing againſt Scripture.

2. We deny that there is any thing in Scripture againſt acknowledged Science, but

but againſt that which is ſo falſly called.

3. Contradictions real in Scripture there are none, but ſuch as Corrupt Diſputers have feigned. Thoſe then weaken not Scripture.

4. We do not abandon *Scripture* as our *Rule of Faith*, when we ſay there are no Contradictions therein, but ſeeming ones to *bad-ſighted men*: We confeſs no hereſies to be in the open letter, nor any Antecedent knowledge to be our *Rule of Faith*, but the *will of God alone* revealed in the *Scriptures*. True it is that Religious Education, and honeſt Tradition, were means to bring us to underſtand the Scripture which is our *Rule*, but that means is not the *Rule it ſelf*. Let the *Deiſt* conſider this: or let him anſwer a Quære in a common caſe; The Carpenter being about to bring his Boy to the uſe of his Rule, informeth him of the *Inches*, *half-feet*, and *feet*, with other lines and meaſures contained in his Rule; is his knowledge of thoſe things prerequired to the right uſe of the *Rule*, become the *Rule it ſelf*? His ſence and reaſon will not ſuffer him to ſay ſo in this Caſe to men: however he is ſharply ſet to diſpute more unreaſonably againſt God.

3. He puts into the mouth of his *Deiſt* all the former objections of his *Sceptick* to be more obſtinately and acutely urged: As,

1. If

1. If ye anſwer thoſe paſſages, which give hands *&c.* to God, by other Scriptures controlling them. He tells you, then ye hold both parts of a Contradiction, which is abſurd.

2. If ye recurr to reaſon or Science, teaching, that God is immutable, a Spirit, *&c.* He replyeth, Science then is your Rule, and not Scripture.

3. If ye ſay ye relye on your Forefathers, or Paſtours skill, then their skill of which ye cannot judge, was your rule, or elſe ye muſt come to *Tradition*, and deſert your *letter-Rule.*

4. He challengeth you, that ye bring along with you thoughts by which ye interpret Scripture, and to which ye will hold; and ſo you make the Scripture a *thing ruled*, but not a *Rule.*

5. He asks this ſmart queſtion, how ye are certain of the truth of the letter in the Text, or whether it be not foiſted in, or ſome way altered, *&c.* as leaving out ſuch a particle as (*Not*) which will turn a negative into an affirmative.

6. If you reply, Conſent of Copies, he ſaith all may be alike faulty; That other Scriptures might be, not come to knowledge; In ſhort, that Copies, Tranſlations, and variety of readings are full of uncertainty: Nay the laſt, ſo many in the New Teſtament, that *Biſhop Uſher* durſt not print them for fear of bringing the whole book into doubt.

doubt. If you say that the Faith of Christ was taught from Father to Son, *&c.* He challenges you, to desert your own Rule, and imbrace Tradition, the Rule of Roman Catholicks; in fine, without this Error, might creep into the Text in substantial points of Faith, which devolves into this; That Scripture-letter held forth as a Rule of Faith, can never convince an obstinate and acute Adversary.

To these many words, we shall return these few things.

1. That the Discourser doth but *Cramben recoquere*, that is needlesly, and unsavorily reiterate, what he made his Sceptick speak; only he may suppose it more obstinately and acutely done by his *Deist*, whom he hath armed for this purpose.

2. He concludes nothing but against *Scriptures letter* unsenced; which never any Protestant (unless wild) did maintain of it self to be the *Rule of Faith*; but as expressing Gods will.

3. Figurative expressions of God, and proper discoveries of him are not contradictory; therefore he that opens the one by the other, is farre enough from holding both parts of a Contradiction, as is fondly, not acutely suggested.

4. We acknowledge the Exercise of reason and Science needful requisits, and useful means under the teaching of Gods spirit, to understand the Rule of Faith delivered

delivered in the Scripture, but this means is not the *Rule* it ſelf.

5. Proteſtants never denied, but ſtrongly aſſerted the neceſſary uſe of our Forefathers teaching their children the Law of the Lord; and ſo, honeſt and faithful Tradition to be an appointed means to bring to the knowledge of the Rule of Faith revealed in the Scripture: Nevertheleſs they grant not any Tradition Oral or Scriptural to be the Rule it ſelf; much leſs *Popiſh Tradition* which is the Rule of *Roman Catholicks*: but have proved it to be deluſive and Apoſtate from the Faith of Chriſt.

6. It is a fooliſh challenge, that Proteſtants bring foreſtalled thoughts, thereby to interpret Scripture to their own wills, and ſo make it a thing *Ruled*, but not a *Rule*. For Scripture by its innate ſence held out, forms their thoughts as the Soveraign Rule to ſquare them by; So their thoughts are ruled by it, and they are not the Rule of that.

7. As to his ſmart queſtion, We ſhall mildly return, it hath been anſwered already; Gods Providence hath kept his own written Oracles in his Church from time to time. And to avoid prolixity, we do referre this *Deiſt* to peruſe the Proteſtant Aſſertours of Scriptures Truth; who have rationally and firmly confuted all theſe Jeſuitical quirks about the Originals, Tranſlations,

ſlations, and various readings of Scripture. If he be not obſtinate to deſtruction he may receive ſatisfaction from them, ſlips or omiſſions of a tittle or term may be by the oſcitancy of ſome, (worthy of ſharpeſt cenſure) but this is curable by comparing with others. But as to what is charged upon that *Admirable Man, Biſhop Uſher*, we muſt ſuſpend our giving credit to the teſtimony of this perſonated *Deiſt*. He might well ſuſpect, what uſe the obſtinate Adverſaries of Gods word might make of the various readings; but feared not the ſhaking of the Authority of the New Teſtament thereby, or of the weakning Scripture-Truth by the ſame.

8. It ſeems all this while, that this *Deiſt is a Roman Catholick*; for were he *one* at large, he would be as obſtinate to be perſwaded to Chriſt by *oral*, as by *written Tradition*. Let us unſmask him then, and he is a Jeſuitical Papiſt; who hath obſtinately enough oppugned the Scripture of God; but how acutely, let the wiſe Reader judge. Surely nothing hath been proved at all to enervate the power of *Scriptnre Reaſon*, as to the convincing of the moſt obſtinate and acute Adverſary of the neceſſity of Faith in Chriſt Jeſus unto eternal Salvation. We ſhall therefore beſtow no further labour upon him, but rather be obedient to the Apoſtles Rule: If any man conſent not to the wholeſome

1 Tim. 6, 3. 4. 5.

words

words of our Lord Jesus Christ, he is a proud fool, knowing nothing, dotingly sick about questions, strifes of words, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the Truth; from these with-draw thy self. So we have done with the obstinate Opposer.

THE
Fourth Discourse
EXAMINED.

IN this fourth Discourse the Author strives to prove the two last Properties of the Rule of Faith, 6th. and 7th. incompetent to Scripture: *Certainty in it self*, and *Ascertainableness to us*. The last of these he saith must stand or fall with the former; therefore he insists only upon the Rules certainty in it self. Form it thus. *That which is the Rule of Faith must be certain in it self, and Ascertainable unto us, but the Scripture is not certain in it self, nor Ascertainable unto us, therefore it cannot be the Rule of Faith.*

In this Syllogism, we deny the Assumption, although we grant not the proposition neither, but upon a due understanding

derſtanding of the terms. It reſts upon the Diſcourſer to make proof againſt Scripture; but the upſhot of all his ventilation, is againſt the letter of Scripture only: His Title beareth it againſt the Scripture in its full comprehenſion; but his diſcourſe is againſt the letter, which barely taken by it ſelf, no Proteſtant ever held to be a Rule of Faith, but with its ſence; and yet this Diſputer will father this all along upon them as Aſſertors of it, and ſo labour to batter them. But it is all injurious and fallacious, unworthy of an ingenious Diſcourſer. Yet let us ſee and conſider how he acquits himſelf in this field.

1. He premiſeth ſome diſtinctions about the Scriptures letter; As that it is conſidered, either *Materially* as ſuch and ſuch Characters, or *Formally* as ſignificative of a determinate ſence ſuppoſed to be Chriſts. Again, both of theſe are conſiderable, either in its *ſingle ſelf*, or as dependention other helps or Cauſes on foot in the world. *S.* 1.

We ſhall animadvert a little here before we proceed; The firſt diſtinction ſeemeth uncouth and ſtrange to us, and unknown in any, unleſs Popiſh ſchools: That the *Diviſum*, the thing divided, and the *Membra dividentia*, the parts dividing, ſhould be every way one and the ſame: So it is here, The Scriptures-*Let-*

ter

ter is the *Diviſum*, or thing divided; The *Character*, which is the very *ſame* with the *Letter*, *and its ſignificativeneſs* or aptneſs to ſignifie, is an Affection indiviſible from it: unleſs we make Scripture *letter* to be as inſignificant daſhes, and crooked lines, which new ſcriblers uſe to make. Indeed we know that Scripture as the *integrum* or *whole* hath been divided into, the *letter* as its *matter*; and the ſence as its form, as into its due parts. This we grant, and what uſe the Diſcourſer will make of his diſtinction, we ſhall conſider though we grant it not as lawful: The Second is but a various acception of letter and ſignificativeneſs together, either in it ſelf, or in dependence upon helps or cauſes of its preſervation: we may note the uſe he makes of this alſo.

2. He applies his firſt diſtinction in Sect. the 2d. to this purpoſe by way of proof of his aſſumption; as is really implied; *That which is lyable to be deſtroyed, as to be burnt, torn, blotted, worn out &c. is not certain in it ſelf to endure, and therefore not aſcertainable unto us.* But *Scriptures letter being the Baſis of its ſignificativeneſs of Gods Sence is ſo liable to be deſtroyed; Therefore this cannot be certain in it ſelf to endure*, nor *aſcertainable unto us*, and then no Rule of Faith, being ſo periſhble. Whereunto the wiſe Diſpoſition of Divine Providence is urged to back it; That he intending mans ſalvation, would not lay

it upon ſuch weak means ſubject to periſhing ſo many waies.

As to this paſſage our reply is this.

1. The Diſcourſer miſtakes ſtill his mark with us in diſputing againſt Scriptures letter only.

2. In his complication of words is ambiguity, when ſometimes he calleth Scriptures letter the *Rule of Faith*, ſometimes the means unto it: between which we have ſtated a great difference already, we grant Scriptures letter to be a means to Faith, but not the Rule of it.

3. We lay not the letter of Scripture, as the *Baſis* of Gods ſence, or *Faiths Rule*, but only as one ſpecial means of expreſſing it; Gods *Arm* alone is the *Baſis* upon which his revealed will or the *Rule of Faith* is grounded; not periſhable or alterable Elements, as is cauſeleſſly ſuggeſted.

4. Suppoſe books, letters, characters, or Elements, that expreſs the will of God ſhould be deſtroyed, (which God never hitherto totally ſuffered) yet the word and will of God, the Rule of Faith endureth for ever: Heaven and Earth may paſs away, but not one jot or tittle of Gods law. The Almighty will ſecure and perpetuate it.

Mat. 5 18.
1 Pet. 1 25.

5. It is no impeachment of the glory of Divine Wiſdome and Providence to order and bring about Mans ſalvation by weakeſt

weakeſt means and in themſelves periſhable; but the greateſt ſublimation of it; therefore did God chooſe weak things not only to confound the mighty, but to bring about the moſt powerful effects in mans Salvation. So God is pleaſed, by the fooliſhneſs of writing his will, as well as preaching, to ſave them that beleeve: Upon which account the Apoſtle wrote to the Corinthians to whom he alſo preached. Words fail as much as letters or rather more ſpeedily: Yet the Diſcourſer will not deny, but that the wiſe diſpoſition of Divine Providence doth by *Oral Tradition* bring about ſalvation unto men. Let him weigh then, which is the ſtrongeſt and moſt laſting means, *words* or *writings*. We do not ſlightly paſſe over, but moſt ſeriouſly conſider, adore and admire divine Providence, who thus croſſeth the wiſdome of the world in effecting his mightieſt deſigns by moſt weak and deſpicable means, in the account of his ſubtleſt Adverſaries: We have therefore anſwered the Exception. 1 Cor. 1. 21. 27.

3. In the next place he proceeds to prove the uncertainty of Scriptures letter, *S.* 3, 4, 5. and then of the Scriptures ſignificativeneſs, *S.* 6. In *S.* 3. he conſiders Scriptures letter in the Cauſes of its preſervation, which he makes two.

1. Some *material* liable to conitnual alterations, and innumerable Contingencies,

(suppose writing, printing, &c.

2. Some *Spiritual*, as *Mens minds* contradistinct to hands. Hence he premiseth, that from these noblest pieces in nature in good reason we may hope for a greater degree of Constancy, than from any other, nay for a perfect unalterableness, and in conceiving truth an inerrableness, if due Circumstances be observed, which are two here noted.

1. Due proposals to affect sense and so beget natural knowledge.

2. Due care to attend unto such proposals, when the impression of the objects is heeded, and the mind affected by it.

In return to this passage.

1. We take for granted, that the material Characters spoken of, are the very letter of Scripture considered in the causes of their preservation.

2. We grant freely that the *material means* of preserving Scriptures-letter are liable to many alterations and contingencies, as in hand-writing and printing.

3. We say, that mens minds are *morally mutable* and corruptible notwithstanding *their physical Immateriality*: Now this moral Corruption of mens minds indangereth Truth most; therefore there is no such reason as is pretended, to hope for greater constancy from them, in preserving-Scriptures letter, than from mens hand-work in writing, forasmuch as the mi

mind guides the hand: much leſſe a perfect unalterableneſs, and inerrableneſs in conceiving Truth, although the due circumſtances propoſed by the Diſcourſer be obſerved.

4. Mens minds are as deficient preſervatives of Scriptures-letter, as their hands, both by moral Corruption and obnoxiouſneſs to perpetual alteration through the alloy of their *material compart.*

5. Notwithſtanding the due propoſal of object and due care to attend, there muſt be alſo a due diſpoſition of the Subject, and means of bringing home, or impreſſing the object on the mind, to beget the certain knowledge of any thing; and no leſs of Scripture.

6. Though God make uſe of mans mind and hand as means to continue his Scripture in his Church, yet he himſelf alone is the efficient and preſerving Cauſe of it, who will keep it from periſhing.

In the 4th Section he makes a reflection from his premiſes.

1. That the Rule of Faith muſt be obvious to men of ordinary ſenſe, not only to Speculators.

2. That Objects of ſenſes, are either *Natural*, as *ſimple* vulgar actions, and matters of Fact, which being oft repeated, are unmiſtakable *&c.* or *compounded Actions*, as the Tranſcribing a whole book conſiſting of ſuch myriads of words *&c.* that it exceeds

humane ear, to keep awake and apply distinct attentions to every of those distinct actions. Yet he grants, that this defect may be provided against, by the care of many sober and sedulous Examiners who may ascertain the truth of the letter of a whole book unto us, *&c.*

Hereunto we shortly reply.

1. The Rule of Faith ought to be obvious to men of ordinary sense, in their own language and plainest way for their understanding; And no less ought these vulgar souls set themselves to apprehend the Rule of faith to salvation; therefore hath God given them reasonable souls.

2. These souls are not bound to look over Transcribers and observe so many myriads of words, single letters, tittles and stops, no more then the Beræans were, who searched the Scriptures given to them, without such excessive labour.

3. Whatever numerous multitude the *Discourser* requires to ascertain him of the truth of Scriptures letter; It satisfieth us, that God hath raised up his Instruments in all ages, both for number and weight sufficient to be his Competent witnesses of his written-Truth; And what is Gods good pleasure in this matter, contents us, notwithstanding the Exactions of unreasonable men.

4. Yet we wonder, that the *Discourser* should trouble himself and his Readers, with

with recalling the certainty of Scriptures letters being; which was enough debated in the two first properties of evidence as to its existence; wherein these are coincident: but we must follow him, as he leadeth.

5. In this 5th. Sect. He applyeth his former Discourse to the matter in hand, which to contract, we shall form into this Argument. If it were certain that there had been such a multitude of Examiners of Scriptures letter in each Copy taken from the first Original, *&c.* If by Excommunication or heavy Ecclesiastick Prohibitions, and Mulcts it had been provided for from the beginning, that none should presume to take a Copy of it, nor that permitted to be read, unless thus examined, then much might have been said for the certainty of Scriptures letter: but, no such order or exactness was ever found to be used, especially about the New Testament, therefore Scriptures letter may be uncertain in every tittle, notwithstanding the diligence used *de facto* to preserve it uncorrupted. This is the sum, only he harps upon some doctrine of Christs written in hearts; which he calls *Tradition*, whereby Scriptures letter may be ascertained; which he referrs to another place.

Hereunto we orderly return.

1. No multitudes of men even the best, can give more assurance of Scriptures letter, than a few, where God is the preser-

ver of it: Men by their crowds may prevail with men, as to gain humane Faith to any thing; but God himself by few or one witness is able to give certainty of his Truth, and work faith unto salvation.

2. No Excommunications, Prohibitions or Mulcts, either from Ecclesiastick or Civil powers, can keep mens hearts more upright, and faithful to their Trust, than the Almighties threatnings, vengeance and curse denounced against such evil doers; therefore the Discourser may do well to consider, whose punishments are most likely to keep men upright, Gods or Mens: If Gods; he will see his Consequence from mens Exactions is not firm, to give us more certainty of mens integrity in the present case; seeing Gods judgments *de facto* do not keep men upright.

3. As to the Assumption, it is partly granted, that no such numbers, and Exactness, as the Author captiously requires, may be found: but otherwise we deny it, and assert; that God hath alwaies maintained his number for this work to ascertain Scriptures-letter both in the old and new Testament: Whereupon the very Romish adversaries are forced to confesse it to be the word of God, however this *Disputer* thinks by his *paralogisms* to delude the world.

4. From

4. From the premiſes we conclude, Scriptures letter cannot be uncertain in every title, ſeeing the Almighty Arm of God hath directed it, and by the faithful diligence of his witneſſes conveied it unto us.

5. As to his exceptions, that the more Copies make the more errors, and many Corrections to have paſſed over the vulgar Edition, and ſtill various readings make doubts, we anſwer.

1. That is not juſtly to be charged upon Scripture, which is accidental to it, by ſome mens Oſcitancies and Gods permiſſion, who orders even ſuch evils of men to the manifeſtation of his own Truth, and the ſhame of lyars: This hurts us nor.

2. The vulgar Edition, which the Trent-Confederacy, have Canonized, is the moſt corrupt of any, as hath been ſhewed by many witneſſes: What impudence then is it for their Pope to injoin it to his Creatures, as the only Authentick Copy? As it is moſt current, ſo is it moſt Currently falſe.

3. Multitude of Copies do not corrupt Scripture but the multiplied faults of men, for which God will plead with them: Yet is there a ſufficient Remedy alſo againſt this evill; by more careful inſpection of faithful Inſtruments under Gods guidance. Theſe then are but reiterated cavils.

6. As

6. As to his close, That we will not have the sence of Christs Doctrine writ in hearts to be the Rule for Correcting of Scriptures letter, which writing he takes for his Tradition, and the help of it to ascertain Scriptures letter, he referrs to another enquiry, we say.

1. We acknowledge that Spirit-writing of Christs Law in hearts, to be a glorious saving work; beyond the Discourſers phanſie of it here.

2. We deny it in any measure to favour Popish Tradition, or to be a Rule of correcting Scripture; for by this must hearts try, whether that be the same mind of Christ written in them as is in the Scripture of God: which will be declared, where the Author urgeth that Scripture for his ends.

3. We shall expect howsoever, what certainty will accrue to *Scriptures letter* from his *Tradition*, in the place where he shall offer it; and there consider it.

6. In this Section he argueth against the 2d. thing proposed, which is *Scriptures significativeness*, Thus, *Scriptures letter is uncertain*; therefore, *the certainty of Scriptures significativeness is quite* lost therein. This he exemplifieth.

1. In the vulgar, they have no *Arts*, *Grammar*, *Logick*, *&c.* they are unable to compare places, and want Principles to settle their Judgments therein.

2. In

2. In the wits of Proteſtants and Socinians claſhing againſt each other with Scripture, about the great points of the B. Trinity and Chriſts Divinity. The weak vulgar cannot attain the ſence of Scripture: The ſtrong and learned do not, for they differ about it: therefore Scriptures-letter is not certain in it ſelf, and ſo cannot perform the office of the Rule of faith, to guide Mankind in their way to Faith, with a rational aſſuredneſs.

In ſhort to all this.

1. We deny the Antecedent, and have proved the contrary, even the certainty of Scriptures-letter under the good hand of God, given and continued untill now *de Facto*, and which the ſame Providence will keep in being and duration: therefore the Conſequence is falſe, Scriptures ſignificativeneſs is not loſt upon that account.

2. As to the vulgar they have reaſonable ſouls, and thence *natural Logick*, which God required them to exerciſe for underſtanding his Law written; and delivered unto them; unto which all that Mankind may attain through grace, and be ſaved by it, who do diligently attend on ſuch Revelations of God; though they have no Arts or skils: as captiouſly are required by the Diſcourſer; God requires not theſe but the former.

3. As to the claſhing of witts among the

the Orthodox and Socinians: one by Scripture affirming, and the other denying the Trinity, or Deity of Christ, This concludes not uncertainty in the Scriptures letter or sense; but infirmity, or worse, iniquity in men, who pervert the plain written word of God. St. *Paul* according to the wisedome given to him wrote to the Hebrews; yet many unstable and unlearned, untaught of God, wrested his Epistles, as they did other Scriptures unto their own destruction. Were his Epistles or the Scriptures any whit the more uncertain in their letters or sense because of their perverse abuse of them? The Disputer dares not say so; and then let him answer himself.

4. These things being clear we infer, Scripture in letter and sence, is certain in its self, and so ascertainable to us, and therefore can perform the office of the Rule of Faith, to guide men in the true way of Faith, with a rational assurednes, who do sincerely and knowingly resign themselves to be ruled by it.

In fine to this Discourse we remind the Author still, We maintain not the *Scripture-letter* barely to be the Rule of Faith; but the Scripture spirited and senced by God. This is the Protestant Confession: We therefore close with this *Counter-Conclusion* general against that of the Discourser, which he layeth against Scripture.

The

The Scripture of God in its integrity wants none of the forementioned properties belonging to the Rule of Faith.

7. In this laſt Section he diſchargeth theſe two things.

1. An Apologie for himſelf, to keep him from being miſtaken, as if in theſe Diſcourſes he were an Enemy to Scripture; He telleth us therefore, that in a great part, he doth but argue as to man.

2. He declares alſo, that he acknowledgeth ſuch Excellencies in thoſe ſacred Oracles, as would task the tongue of men and Angels to lay them forth: And in ſhort that he conteſts with them only, who maintain Scriptures-letter to be the Rule of Faith: which he ſuppoſeth is warranted by the Apoſtles and their Succeſſors, who went not with books in their hands to preach and deliver Chriſts Doctrine, but with words in their mouths, *&c.*

Unto this briefly we return.

1. Arguing againſt Truth only, as to man, will not render any excuſable or guiltleſs, when all the while he cordially diſputes againſt God in his written word, which is true and Faithful.

2. As for the Reverence he bears to thoſe ſacred Oracles, it is by his own confeſſion in another place with this *proviſo*, that they be ſenced by his Tradition: otherwiſe he concludes them to be no words of God. And is not this great honour

nour done to the Scripture, that mans Tradition ſhould make it Divine Truth?

3. He profeſſeth to conteſt with none but ſuch as hold Scriptures-letter only unſenced to be the Rule of Faith: And who are they? Surely they are no Proteſtants: Let him not therefore falſly charge them.

4. The inſtance of the Apoſtles will not help him; For though they went not with books in their hands to preach, yet both Chriſt himſelf read a written Text out of the Prophet *Iſaiah*, and preached on it; And the Apoſtles alſo themſelves urge conſtantly the writings of the Prophets to make good their Doctrine of Chriſt: So that they were no Enemies to the right uſe of Scriptures-letter; Neither are we. It had been to better purpoſe, if the *Diſcourſer* had brought this Example to his own Prieſts and Prelates with other idle Droans, to teach them to preach without book; and in that rational convincing way as the Apoſtles did: But this would ſpoil his Popiſh Cauſe.

Luk. 4. 17. 18, 19, 20. 21. Acts 2, 16, 25.

2. The next thing in his cloſe is a Crimination of others, whom he ſtileth *Revolters* (ſuppoſe from his Tradition to the Scripture): Theſe he ſaith put the Scriptures into the peoples hand to pleaſe them, and leave it to their Interpretation: So it is brought to the vileſt contempt: This makes ſo many Sects in this our miſerable Country, that

Country, that it is impoſſible to bring them under Eccleſiſtical or Temporal Government; and in ſum, this Principle that the Scripture is the Rule of Faith is the neceſſary Parent of ſuch ruinous and unredreſſable diſorders.

Here we have his Reverend thoughts of the Scripture, where his *venom* is diſgorged againſt the word of God, and the Aſſertours of it: But it is a moſt untrue and malitious charge, whereunto it were anſwer abundantly ſufficient, only to ſay, *The Lord rebuke thee Satan*: But yet we ſhall adde ſome things by way of reply in the words of ſoberneſs and Truth.

1. It is no *Revolt* from *lying Tradition* to the *Truth of God* in Scripture, but a *Converſion* from Idols unto God.

2. Scripture is the gift of God to his people, and Proteſtants dare not deny it to, or take it from, them; (as the Papal Powers exalting themſelves above God moſt Antichriſtianly do) yet is it not left to every ones vain and private Interpretation: This is ſlanderous.

3. Scripture being the Rule of Faith, wherever it ruleth, maketh ſouls moſt orderly and exactly obedient to *Civil*, and *True Church-Government*. It doth indeed oppugne the *Tyrannical Hierarchy of Rome*, and every thing that exalts it ſelf againſt God: but it makes ſouls obedient to Powers

ers ordained of God and that for Conſcience ſake. This foul reproach the Authors fore-fathers have charged on the Scripture, and he walketh in their ſteps: We ſhall only retort thus much in experienced Truth, that both *France* and *England* have felt the ſad and deadly Events of their Traditionary Jeſuitical Doctrine, which the Scriptures of God and the lovers of them abhorre. We conclude then Scriptures Rule of Faith is no Parent of ruinous and unredreſſeable diſorders, but of the ſweeteſt order, which followed, would work out moſt perfect peace in the Church and in the world: The wolf would dwell with the lamb *&c.* Righteouſneſs and Peace would then kiſſe each other, yea and abundance of peace ſo long as the moon endureth. This is Scriptures Honour, the Rule of our Faith. We ſhall now hear what he can ſay for his Tradition.

Iſai. 11. 6, 7, 8, 9.

THE

THE
Fifth Diſcourſe
EXAMINED.
About Traditions, Notion, &c.

THis whole diſcourſe contains two Heads.

1. The opening of the Notion of *Tradition*. *Sſ.* 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, & 6. 2. The applying of the premiſed Properties of the Rule unto *Tradition* and the concluſion from the whole. 1. Of the opening the term.

1. In the Entrance the *Diſcourſer* profeſſeth, that he had quite loſt his labour in his former ſearch for the Properties of the *Rule of Faith in Scripture*: Therefore, he will ſee, whether better hope may be to find them in his *Oral* or *Practical Tradition*, by which he meaneth, *a delivery down from hand to hand of the Sence and Faith of Fore-fathers. Sect.* 1.

To this, 1. We maintain, though, the Diſputer have quite loſt his labour (which he is willing to do) yet we have not loſt ours in proving *Scriptures Allſufficiency*,

ficiency, to be the *Rule of Faith*; and disproving his frivolous and fallacious Exceptions against it,——

2. We take his meaning, That *Oral-Tradition*, is a Delivery down from hand to hand, that is, by word and visible Action of the sence and faith of his Fore-fathers: Where yet we note that the matter delivered by word is part of his meaning; for it is the delivery of such a thing even sence and faith of Fore-fathers.

2. In the next Section, he illustrates his meaning of *Tradition* by a more expres conceit of it in the nurturing of Children as to the knowledge of Natural, Civil, and Artificial things, *S.* 2.

All which without reiterating we easily grant; though it will not in all things fit so wel to the conveying down of Faith as we may find hereafter.

3. In this Section, he saith, there wants nothing but to apply the same Method to spiritual affairs, and then may be gained a compleat and proper notion of *Faith*, *Tradition*, *S.* 3.

We shall therefore observe how we apply it; if justly, we shall join issue, if not we shall declare our reasonable dissent, and shew the disproportion, which is not little between *Spiritual* and *Natural* things as to the knowledge of them.

4. He applyeth this to Christians Children, and observeth,

1. They

1. They hear ſounds, and have dim notions of God, Chriſt, Saviour, Heaven, and Hell *&c.* Afterward according to capacities they are put upon ſome External Actions, deterred from ſin, taught virtue; and to do ſome duties of prayer, *&c.* They learn the Commandements, Creed, *&c.* And by converſing with Fore-fathers, they come to more knowledge: Then they ariſe a ſwarm of the ſame Religion, holding the ſame points with the former Age: And this comes on not by leaps from 100 years to a 100. but from mouth to mouth, and day to day, as young Eaglets made to ſee the ſun by degrees in his full glory, *&c.* So theſe proceed from perceiving the dawning to be acquainted with the common day light of Chriſtian Doctrine, *S.* 4.

Whereunto, 1. We grant this to be a rational and natural help to bring up poſterity to the knowledge and Faith of Chriſt and a means commanded.

2. Yet we ſay alſo, that by the ſame means from Fathers to Children is delivered down all falſe, ſuperſtitious, Idolatrous Religion and all ungodlineſs and Profaneneſs. So that it is not peculiar to convey Faith.

3. We except further, that this *Oral-Tradition*, is not hereupon the *Rule of Faith*, (which the Diſputer is to prove) but only a partial help or means to nurture up Children from their infancy toward

ward the knowledge of it, which is *the will of God only*, revealed in the Scripture.

4. We animadvert that all this is only able to guide unto the external profession of Faith, but not without Grace to make true beleevers.

5. He proceeds to prove this a real Truth; from the practise of the *Primitive Faithful*, before the books of Scripture were writ: and from the first imbuing of Protestants with Christian Principles: Nay he affirms that the very Presbyterians, much more the Protestants do adhere to their Faith, because their Parents and Pastors taught them: and not upon the Evidence of Scriptures letter, He casts in the next place some reflexions on persons, and concludes, that the Protestants owe all their union and strength to Tradition; and all their distractions and weakness to the renouncing of it, *S.* 5.

In short to this, 1. By *Primitive faithful*, we suppose he means *Primitive Christians* in and immediately after Christs and the Apostles times; Had not these the Scriptures of the Prophets in that time? Did not they teach their Children from those Scriptures? was not *Timothy* taught those holy Scriptures? and was he not made wise by them unto salvation? they were not then before all Scripture was extant, nay some of the Churches then, had

had Epistles written from the Apostles: It seemeth this was not narrowly heeded by the Discourser.

2. No Protestants ever denied the necessary use of Tradition of Truth unto posterity, but assert it as a duty Commanded by God upon Parents to their Children to bring them unto Faith in the Revelation of God: and acknowledge, that they were at first so imbued with the Elements of true Christian Religion.

3, Yet all true Protestants grown up to knowledge deny, that they adhere to the faith of Christ upon this account, because their Parents and Pastors taught them, but because now they find it to be indeed the true revealed will of God in his written word: of the truth whereof not their own private Interpretation; but the powerful work of Gods spirit by it upon their hearts perswadeth them.

4 It is something strange that this *Disputer* should make *Presbyterians and Protestants* contradistinct members; unless he account the *Episcopal* order *Protestants*, and the *Presbyterian* scarce so much; and so cast in a bone of Contention between them: which savours not of Ingenuity. He cannot be ignorant that several of the Protestant Churches embrace *Presbyterian* Government; And however others are under other forms, yet have they equally contended for the Protestant Faith against

Popiſh Errors: which doubtleſs they will do ſtill.

5. It is a moſt unhandſome reflexion, upon thoſe Perſons whom he nameth, meerly to caſt an *odium* on them, or render them more ſuſpicious than others; when he deſires from his Anſwerer more civil uſage toward himſelf. He may receive a mark alſo.

6. The Proteſtants do owe their union and ſtrength to God only, and to their ſtedfaſtneſs in one *Scripture-Truth*. Their Diſtractions and their weakneſs, they own unto ſins among them: and ſpecially to thoſe who forſake the *ſimplicity and unity of Goſpel-written Truth* to cleave unto the vain *and unſavory Traditions of men*. No more to this, but only a deſire, that the *Diſcourſer* would reſolve this queſtion, why are there ſo many Sects, orders, and diſtractions among the Papiſts, if Tradition be ſuch a ſoveraign Cure, and all of them are profeſſed ſubjects thereunto?

6. The nature of his Tradition being thus explained, it renders, as he ſaith, many objections unneceſſary to be anſwered or mentioned.

1. That this *Tradition* may come from a kind of *Prophetical Afflatus* or *Inſpiration*; it is only built upon perfect Evidence of their beſt ſenſes.

2, That Proteſtants have taken a wrong aim, to diſpute againſt *Res traditæ*, the

things

things delivered, and so accuse Papists for holding humane Traditions, or things invented by men for faith: whereas when they speak of the *Rule of Faith* they mean by the word *Tradition*, only the *Method* of publickly delivering and conveying down Tenets held to have come from Christ. *S. 6.* This is the sum of the first Head for opening Tradition.

We perceive not yet, that *Tradition explained* by the Author rendreth many or any objections unnecessary to be answered or mentioned; whatever conceit he may have of his own Explanation; for it no way cleareth those two, which he himself here suggesteth. It is requisite therefore to ponder what he saith.

1. Cannot his *Tradition* explained be truly charged to flow from some kind of Prophetical *Afflatus* or flashes of pretended *Inspiration*, because it is built upon perfect Evidence of their best senses? may not senses, even the best be deluded? yea and be so bewitched by the Devil to beleeve lies? We must therefore, seeing he hath started it, deal with him about this objection, against his Tradition.

2. We take it for granted, notwithstanding his touching upon *natural Tradition*, his scope is to transfer all to his *Popish Tradition*, for which he only contends in all his discourses; when he speaks of the doctrine of Christ uninterruptedly delivered

livered to his Romish Church thereby: and hereupon owns himself and Papists to be Traditionary Christians. But for him to argue from Tradition *general* to his own in *special* or from one kind of *Tradition* in the Church which is *true*, to another which is *false*, it is but fallacious, and will not be allowed him; we see him better, than to be so cheated by him.

3. We shall suggest unto him that ever since God had a Church in this world visible, there were therein, *A seed after the flesh, and a seed after the Spirit.* So it was between *Cain* and *Seth* in *Adams* family. Now doubtless *Cain* by *Tradition* taught his Children his *Faith* of God, which made them *Apostates* from the Truth: and no less did *Seth* teach his Posterity by Tradition his *Faith* in God; and thereby kept them to the true faith untill they mingled with the children of men and were corrupted so farre, that God took them away by the flood. Yet both these received their respective Traditions, upon the perfect Evidence of the best senses they had. Evidence of sense then, that this was delivered to them as from God, did not secure any of them from being deceived, but some higher power of the Lord guided the true seed in his way. So it was in *Noahs* Family. So in *Abrahams*, and so along unto *Moses*, and from him to *Christ*; who contended against the Pharisees

ſees in the days of his Fleſh, for nulling the written commands of God by their Tradition.

4. To come neerer to him; after Chriſts aſcending to glory, and the Apoſtles then ſurviving, there aroſe two parties in the Chriſtian Church viſible; The one ſprung from the *Myſterie of Godlineſs* God manifeſt in the fleſh: The other ſpawned from the *Myſterie of Iniquity*. Theſe both profeſſed Chriſt, and doubtleſs by word of mouth taught him to their Children and Diſciples; but the one purely and ſincerely as the *truth* was in *Jeſus*; and the other corruptly with thoſe *lyes and falſehoods* which turned away many from the true faith of Chriſt, even in thoſe times: and yet both theſe Diſciples received what was delivered of Chriſt unto them upon perfect Evidence of their beſt ſenſes; but the one with ſenſe and reaſon inlightned by Gods ſpirit; and the other with ſenſes, the beſt they had, but faſcinated by the Devil, to beleeve lyes, becauſe they loved not the Truth. 1 Tim. 3. 15. 6. 2 Theſ. 2.

5. To draw a little cloſer to him, we may thus put him to it: If his Popiſh Tradition did indefectively iſſue from the Church in the Apoſtles time, was it from them that iſſued from, and contended for the *Myſterie of Godlineſs*? or from them, who took their riſe from the *Myſtery of Iniquity*, and wrought under it? The firſt we

we deny; for *Tradition* meerly *Popish*, is but from corrupt sences of men, added to the simple Truth of Jesus which he abhors, as *Peters Prelacy*, *The Popes succession of him*, *the introducing of other Mediators*, besides the Son of God, who is the only way to the Father; none of these came from Christ or his Apostles. The second is justly charged on them, that Popish Tradition is the great Apostasie from the Mysterie of Godliness; and so the design of perfecting the Mysterie of Iniquity in these latter daies: turning souls from the true Faith of Christ, unto lying vanities, and that by the hypocrisie of their Forefathers telling lyes unto their Children. This is strongly made good against the Papal Sea, by many Witnesses of Gods Truth, and specially by that *Renowned* Mr. *Mead*, in his book of the Apostasie of the latter times, from that Prophesie, 1 *Tim.* 4, 1, 2, 3. And by the learned Dr. *Moor* in his Treatise of the Mysterie of Iniquity. 2 *Thes.* 2, 3, 4, 7. The *Discourser* and his Confederates have need to clear themselves from this charge: But if not (as none could do yet) the objection stands in more force notwithstanding his Tradition explained, that some kind of *Diabolically Prophetical Afflatus*, is the Cause of his Tradition, however they receive it, as he boasts, upon perfect evidence of their best senses: For so they may

may embrace *lyes*, and yet take them to be *Truth*.

2. He ſuppoſeth, that by his *explaining* the notion of his *Tradition*, he hath at once diſht all the objections of the Proteſtants againſt Popiſh Tradition; for he ſaith, they took all a wrong aim, to diſpute againſt *things delivered by Oral ſpeech, in ſtead of Tradition it ſelf*, which is only the Method of delivering down publickly the Tenets held to come from Chriſt: So they have all miſtaken the Papiſts meaning in the controverſie about *Tradition*, and all their batteries have miſſed the mark.

Silly Proteſtants! Had they no more wit all along but to miſtake the queſtion? nay ſimple Jeſuits! Could not they ſee their miſtakes in all their Combats with them; and tell them they ſhot beſides the mark? Surely this Diſcourſer is more quick ſighted to perceive this error at this day, than all his Fore-fathers. But let us uſe our eies alſo, to ſee this miſtake if we can, or elſe let this *Diſputer* ſee, that even in this matter he himſelf is miſtaken.

1. Have not the Proteſtants alwaies in the Controverſie with Papiſts about Traditions being the *Rule of Faith*, diſtinguiſhed between the *Form and Method of Tradition* by ſpeech, and the *matter* of Tradition delivered? Nay and as they have diſtinguiſhed ſo they have determined,

termined; that as to the way of delivering Christs Doctrine by *Oral Tradition*, they granted it to be a special means of conveying down Truth and bringing unto Faith; though not the only one, but joint with the Scriptures of God being conformed to them, yea and subject to be tried by them. Hear the words of one Souldier of Christ, *Chamier. In this whole business) Catholicks* (truly so called even Protestants; *think it must be distinguished between things which are delivered in the Church*, and the *course* or *manner of delivering them*. And further, *the form of delivering we acknowledge twofold*, either *by the Holy Scripture*, or *by daily instruction*; which is oral-Tradition. This and much more to this purpose doth this Protestant Souldier express. And no less the Churches of them, who are not offended with the name or use of Tradition rightly stated; He did not therefore take wrong aim; no more do the rest.

Catholici in hoc toto negotio distinguendum putant inter res quæ traduntur in Eccleſia et rationem earum tradendarum. &c. Panſt. To. 1. 8. c. 1. S. 18.

Rationem rerum tradendarum duplicem eſſe agnoſcimus: vel per Scripturam ſacram &c. vel per quotidianam inſtructionem ibid. S. 19.

2. Let the *Diſcourſer* speak out yet; Doth he maintain Tradition only as *Oral ſpeech* to be the *Rule of Faith*, without the sence or matter delivered in it? Let him take his airy *Rule* then which is but a senceless sound: But he tells us, that his Tradition is the method of delivering down *Tenets* held to come from Christ; Are not these *Res Traditæ?* against which while we dispute, he saith

we

we miſtake the mark; And doth not he deliver theſe things all along in his Diſcourſe, for *Tradition* to be *the Rule of Faith*? Let him reconcile himſelf: and not pretend to vent ſome new thing to the world, for defenſe of his Popiſh cauſe, ſeeing he ſaith no more, than what his Fathers have ſaid before him, when they maintained the unwritten word of God, which was Tradition in matter and form, to be their Rule of Faith. The Proteſtants then miſtook not in charging them to hold humane Tradition for Faith, or things invented by men.

3. The Explication of Tradition by the Author proveth not any miſtake of Proteſtants in their diſputes, neither weakens their objections againſt Popiſh Tradition. In ſum to ſhut up this head; If the Diſcourſer aim only to prove the neceſſity of giving down the doctrine of Chriſt by Oral-Tradition, we join iſſue and grant it to be a good means to bring to the Faith of the Goſpel: but not the only means, nor independent upon any other, but ſuch as muſt convey the ſame will of Chriſt contained in the Scriptures, and ought to be tried by them. Yet ſtill do we deny it to be the *Rule of Faith*, which alone is the will of God, revealed in Scripture; and thence opened, and delivered down by teaching to the Sons of men.

2. After

2. After his Explication of the meaning of *Tradition*, he proceeds to apply the properties of the Rule of Faith unto it in the following Sections.

1. In the 7th. Sect. he saith, that to *be be Evident to all as to its Existence* (which is the first Property) absolutely agrees to Tradition: For this conveying Practical doctrines by best Senses, as Eies and Ears, and that by sounds daily heard, and Actions seen, is as Evident to all sorts as to its Existence, as to see and hear: So it may be insinuated into Vulgar and Children and Babes in some degree to affect them therewith.

1. We would understand what the *Discourser* means by this Properties *absolutely* agreeing to Tradition; If he mean *Convertibly* so that it agreeth to nothing else, we deny it: but if he mean only that it plainly or simply agreeth to it, we grant it; Vocal sounds are Evident to their Existence: So are letters and writing also unto such subjects as are capable of them.

2. We grant that *Oral-Tradition* doth reach more ages and capacities than *Scripture doth*, therefore hath God commanded it to be used to our Children, as they may become capable of hearing, and observing: but still do we bind up this method to the matter, that is imported and conveid in it; that it be consonant to Gods revealed will in Scripture; and that

reading

reading alſo as well as hearing is as uſeful and neceſſary for ſubjects capable, to bring them to know Chriſts Doctrine.

3. We demand of him, whether practical doctrines conveied by this *Tradition*, be not *Res Traditæ*, that is, matters delivered in this method? He cannot deny it? How then can he charge us with miſtake, when we grant the method agreeable to Gods will for conveying his Truth, but deny their doctrins to be Chriſts which they give down this way. Popiſh Tradition in form and matter is peccant.

4. We deny, that his common vulgar children, and much more Babes, are affected with the Practical doctrines pronounced although they hear the ſound of words: It would be a rare thing to ſhew ſuch Babes as are affected with Doctrine: Many may hear the voice, and yet not receive the Doctrine, who are more capable then his Vulgar are.

5. Suppoſe theſe ſounds may affect theſe perſons, yet they are but only means to bring to Faith, not the Rule of it, which is the *Diſcourſers* taſk to make good. Therefore this Tradition may have Evidence as to the Exiſtence of *means*, not of the *Rule of Faith*, which is not to his pretended purpoſe. His own firſt Property then is not ſo abſolutely agreeable to his profeſſed *Rule of Faith*.

2. In

2. In *S.* 8. He applyeth his 2d. Property of the Rule to his Tradition, which is, *That its ruling Power should be easily Evidenceable to any Enquirer.* This he illustrates to any rude Doubter by instancing in Protestants, that if they in successive generations, should by speech deliver down to their children their professed faith, and these successively receive it, they must all be Protestants; This Tradition would have such evident ruling Power over them. This method then is easily Evidenceable to be the certain way of deriving down Christs Doctrine while the world shall last. This property therefore of the *Rule of Faith* agreeeth to Tradition.

Our Reply is 1. That the instance given holdeth forth only the Evidence of the ruling power of the *means or method* of bringing to Faith, and to walk by the true Rule of Faith; not of the *Rule of Faith it self*: Such is *Oral-Tradition* of the Truth and no more.

2. Neither is this a *Reciprocal Property* of the means to Faith. For it agreeth as well to help on and convey down all false Religion, as well as true; So *Mahometan Tradition* helps on to give down the Faith of *Mahomet*: and Popish Tradition to convey Popery to their Posterity; which is faith, Papal, Idolatrical, and Apostate from Christ Jesus, the only Mediator between God and Man: This way

also

also Protestants convey their Principles unto their Children, which are the written Truths of God, or Christs true Doctrine. If therefore this Property agree to *all Tradition*; and not to that *only* which giveth out the knowledge of Christ; It is not worthy of the name of a *Property*, either of the means or *Rule* of faith, being common to all other things.

3. Further we except, that bare *Oral-Tradition*, is not so much as a means to bring to faith of It self, but as it carrieth in it the Principles and Doctrine of Christ and therewith indeed it may bring to the knowledge of Christ. So that this is *Res Tradita* or the *thing delivered*, without which Tradition cannot be so much as the means to bring to the faith of Christ. Concerning which this Disputer warneth us, that we mistake, if we aim at the matter of his Tradition. We grant Tradition by word of mouth to be a special way to faith, but no further then as it conveyeth the Truth of Christ. The Method without the matter is a vain sound.

4. As the Ruling Power of Tradition, It may be *natural* and *de Facto*; So Tradition of falsehood may have actually a delusive power to lead to lies: Or it may be *Divine* and *de jure*, which is *reciprocal* with the *Tradition of Truth*: This indeed hath a Ruling Power from God to command Faith, and souls are bound to be

obedient to it. But Popiſh Tradition hath no ſuch Ruling Power; much leſs is it evident or evidenceable to any reaſonable Enquirer; The *Diſputer* therefore concludes falſely and fallaciouſly, that this Property evidently agreeth to his Popiſh Tradition, becauſe it agreeth to ſome other kind of Tradition of Gods Truth contradiſtinct to that. He muſt therefore reaſon better to gain Credit to his Rule.

3. In the 9th and 10th *Sſ.* he proceeds to apply his third Property of the Rule of Faith unto Tradition, which is, *That it is apt to juſtifie unreflecting and undoubting perſons, that they proceed rationally while they relye upon it*: This he ſaith is found exactly in Tradition.

Concerning this we aſſert No Rule can juſtifie them as rationally proceeding in their relying on it, who irregularly uſe it, though it be the trueſt. Now that men ſhould take any thing upon truſt without reflecting on the matter delivered, or doubting of it in the leaſt meaſure, whether from *Oral* or *Scriptural Tradition*, eſſpecially in matters of faith unto ſalvation, is unreaſonable and brutiſh. For it is neceſſary for reaſonable Creatures both to reflect, and queſtion matters of ſerious concernment, (among which the matters of ſalvation are the greateſt) before they beleeve them: whoever do otherwiſe, do fooliſhly;

foolishly; neither are they justifiable in relying presumptuously on the best of Rules. No Tradition of Truth therefore doth actually or can justifie such kind of irregular believers. If Popish Tradition can do it, for which the Author pleads, it must be a Rule like themselves; and so Folly may justifie folly among the Papists; but otherwise it cannot justifie them before God or Men.

Yet he goeth on to prove it and to remove objections against it.

1. It is madness (as he saith) not to beleeve great multitudes of knowers, if no possible reason be to doubt, that they conspire to deceive us. Now in his way of Tradition, all Deliverers or immediate Forefathers are knowers; As they who immediately heard the Apostles who were taught and practised all requisite knowledge: of which it is impossible the rudest person should be ignorant, whoever had any effect of such a teaching wrought upon him, *&c.* in *S.* 9.

We reply 1. We beleeve, that whoever had the saving Effect from the Apostles teaching wrought upon them, had all requisite knowledge to salvation, and accordingly practis'd it all their lives.

2. Yet all who heard the Apostles preach, were not such knowers, neither such practisers of their doctrine: but many turned Apostates and made shipwrack

of Faith and a good Conſcience; of which n their times they all complained, while the *Myſterie of Iniquity was working.*

1 Joh. 2. 19.

3. Such multitudes of knowers, as they profeſſed to be, it is no madneſs to ſuſpect, that they were deceived, and ſo to make their party ſtronger, might and did conſpire to deceive: If it be madneſs, the Apoſtle was ſo mad, as to call them deceitful workers, and their number was not ſmall, as is apparent: Gods true number was the leaſt. But could all theſe numbers juſtifie any who without reflecting, or inquiring, or reaſonably doubting, did rely on their word? we ſuppoſe none ſo wild as to affirm it. Reaſon will try before it truſt. And ſuch beleevers who upon due trial, receive and hold faſt that which is true and good, are juſtified by God himſelf. Hereupon *Nathaniel* was commended by Chriſt himſelf, to be an Iſraelite indeed: when other haſty and unreflecting hearers are rejected by him.

2 Cor. 11. 3.

1 Theſ. 5. 21.

Joh. 1. 46, 47.

4. We aſſert there is not only poſſible, but probable conſideration to awaken in our reaſon a doubt, that multitudes may conſpire to deceive; that they did ſo under *the Myſterie of Iniquity* in the Apoſtles time; and in carrying on that deſign of Satan in after ages, as Hiſtories do declare, and the ſad Effects of it do demonſtrate to us at this day.

5. We

5. We deny that in the way of his Tradition, *all Deliverers* or immediate Forefathers were knowers; neither did they all hear the Apostles and obey them as is pretended: And if a judgment may be made by their succeeding and surviving seed, the Popish Fore-fathers were rude and ignorant enough. Let the Body therefore of these *Popish Tradition-Deliverers*, be never so considerable for number, they are inconsiderable for weight or worth.

6. We also charitably judge that Parents may be apt to teach their Children, what they have been taught themselves to be good and true and needful to Eternal salvation; and that they would not purposely destroy them: yet this knowingly we say, that Parents carried by the strength of delusion themselves, may and do actually lead their Children to perdition which they seem to abhor.

7. We conclude, as to that which the Discourser studieth here to evince, That Fore-fathers delivering down the Truth of Christ to Children, were a good help to bring them to Faith; but their Tradition was no Rule of their Faith, when it came to Act: but the will of God revealed. Yet we deny that hence it follows, all Tradition is of a certain kind of nature to bring souls to the Faith of Christ much less Popish Tradition, which in most things seduceth souls from him, and for

this alone the Disputer here contends. In all which returns our brains rove not wildly, neither are unsettled to any degree of madness, but we have spoken the words of soberness and Truth: or if we be herein reputed to be besides our selves, it is for Christ and his Scriptures sake, against false Tradition. As for what the Discourser imposeth on us, that we must not suspect deceit among his multitudes unanimously agreeing in their Testimony about *matter of Fact*, We do not contend with him about *matter of Fact*. We yeeld that the multitude of his Forefathers did give out Tradition to their Posterity; but we strive about matters of Faith, and deny, that in their Traditions they did teach their children the true faith of Christ. And notwithstanding their postures and gestures, that they look seriously, when then speak, act themselves, and practise accordingly, and shew in the whole course of their Conversation, that they hope to be saved &c. We say the greatest False-Prophets, false Apostles, Idolaters, and superstitious ones have done the like in outward professions of God and his Christ; when their hearts have been farre remote from the Truth. No trust is to be given either to the looks or to the garb of *Protestants* or *Papists*: These things are weak to move wise men or argue men mad, who suspect hypocrisie in them.

Fronti nulla fides.

2. He

2. He moveth an objection against this justifying Power of Tradition, which he attempts to answer in *S.* 10. It is objected thus: Multitudes of plain honest meaning souls are as much justifiable for beleeving Scripture, therefore this property belongs not only to Tradition. His answer is, that they cannot be so much justifiable, setting aside *Traditions help*; For without this, the sence totally depends upon the Judgments, Fancies or skils of men; which they are unqualified to judge of, not upon the open verdict of sense and sensations, which is certain. This he illustrates by the proceedings of a Jury of the plainest high shooes in matter of Fact: and by the common course of the vulgar, in believing there were such a one as King *James*, and Queen *Elizabeth*, of which Tradition ascertains them, and not the Authority of any Statute-book *&c.* whence he concludes the 3d condition of the Rule of Faith, is manifestly found agreeing to Tradition.

We return to all this that the objection stands in force, notwithstanding his pretended answer to it; For the demonstration whereof, we shall reply unto particulars.

1. We have already proved that *Scripture* can and will justifie all them who regularly rely upon it as a *Rule of Faith*, that is, such as upon due and serious consideration of it, and a due reception of the

will of God in it, do resign themselves to be guided by it: God will justifie such reliers on *Scripture-Tradition*: but none that foolishly, unreflectingly, and undoubtingly pretend to cast themselves upon it, for this is rash presumption.

2. We deny not the help of true and Faithful Tradition, to shew us that the Scripture is the true word of God; but yet this Tradition, we acknowledge not needful to give us its sence, neither want we Popish Tradition at all. The Bible is sufficiently known.

3. We say again, that the sence of Scripture is inspired of God; and so innate; as all propositions uttered by men carry their sence in them: speaking or preaching may hold out that sence, but it giveth none to the propositions of Gods Truth

4. Faith depending on this sence, is not relying on the judgments, Fancies or skils of men; but upon the plain revelation of God, in matters of salvation: And every man is bound to exercise his reason, and grow to such abilities that he may discern between Truth and falshood. Hereunto the most Vulgar should labour to attain; but spiritual sluggishness in themselves, and carelesness in their guides and teachers, causeth most to sit down in ignorance, and please themselves in presuming on mercy, especially when they

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are taught that ignorance is the mother of Devotion. These are not justifiable by Scripture, nor by Tradition: but other serious souls are justified by God, however condemned by this Disputer.

5. Senses and sensations are not quadrate means to take in Faith. These may judge of sights and sounds, but not of spiritual matters conveyed by them. The best understanding is required to receive in these things, and that not only *natural* but *Spiritual*, which alone can receive these great things of God. Such beleevers than are not justifiable, who take in nothing of God but by their Senses and sensations. There is no proportion between these and faith; much less certainty of their reception of it: upon whose verdict yet in these matters the Discourser placeth his greatest stress and assuredness.

6. As to his Illustrations they blind the matters in hand, but give no light to them.

1. His Jury of plain *High-shoes* judge only of matter of Fact by the sight of *six witnesses*; and yet they must proceed according to the Law too: but we are contending of matters of Faith, whereof sense is no judge.

2. His application is no way fit; when he saith, take away Tradition, (which he meaneth Popish) and all ground for certain

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certain ſence fails us, either for the meaning, or even Letter of Scripture. The letter of Scripture is evidently teſtified by Tradition faithful before *Papal Rome* was built, and as to the ſence and meaning of Scripture it is inſpired, and ſelf evidencing to faithful humble and induſtrious ſouls ſearching therein without help of his Tradition.

3. As to his Method of knowing, that there were ſuch a one as *King James* and Queen *Elizabeth*; we grant that by Tradition the rudeſt may come to know there were ſuch perſons; without troubling them with ſtatute-books. Yet ſuppoſe that Statute-books make no mention of any ſuch King or Queen, or that Hiſtory ſhould not only be ſilent of them, but teſtifie that there were no ſuch perſons: wiſe men would ſtagger at it, and not believe you, however your vulgar Tradition give it out. Let us truly bring this home to our Caſe. The Diſcourſer ſaith, that his Popiſh Tradition bringeth down the Faith of Chriſt: The Scripture (which neither he, nor his Fathers durſt deny to be the word of God) is not only ſilent of many points which he calls Faith; but expreſly contradicts them, what wiſe man will believe his *Tradition-Oral* againſt *Tradition Scriptural* in theſe matters of Faith? His third Condition then agreeth not to his Tradition.

4. He

4. He advanceth his ſtrength to make good his ſixth Condition, and in doing this, he will evidently prove the fourth, fifth, and ſeventh alſo agreeing to his Tradition, in the 11th. 12th. 13th. 14th. *Sſ.* We ſhall hear and try.

1. In *Sſ.* 11. he layeth down ſome premiſes, and from them concludeth. His Argument intire and rightly formed is this. *What is built on Immoveable grounds*, or *is certain in it ſelf, hath in it wherewith to ſettle or ſatisfie the moſt piercing wits, convince the moſt obſtinate Adverſaries*, and to *aſcertain us abſolutely*: but *Scripture is not, and Tradition is built on ſuch certain grounds &c.* Therefore to this and not to that agree, thoſe conditions. Other paſſages intervene between the premiſes and concluſion, deſerving animadverſion.

In this Argument. 1. We grant the Propoſition as univerſally ſtated.

2. We deny the aſſumption concerning *Tradition*, whether *univerſally*, or *particularly* taken; For all Tradition is not built upon immoveable grounds, as all men know: Neither is Popiſh Tradition ſo certainly founded, for which the Diſcourſer here only contends, however he hideth it under indefinite terms. Some Tradition we yeeld, is ſo built upon immoveable Grounds; as *Scriptural* (which we have proved) and all that *Oral-Tradition* which is equivalent to it, and reciprocal

procal with it; but no more: and so we grant the particular Conclusion. But this will not gratifie the Disputer at all.

3. His proof intervenient, That his Tradition is built upon infallible grounds is, because Faith must be infallible, and such it cannot be, unless it hath infallibly certain grounds; this ground of Faith is its Rule, and this Rule is his Tradition. It is true that the immoveablenes of a superstructure argueth necessarily the immoveableness of its foundation: So Christ declareth the wisdome of a true Christian building up to salvation, his house cannot fall, because it is founded on a Rock, which cannot be moved. But all this while Popish faith is fallible, built upon Popish Tradition only, which therefore is fallible, and can give no firm ground for true Faith.

Mat. 7. 24. 25.

4 We must except against the Issue drawn up.

1. Against that which is supposed by him, *viz.* That there are only two grounds or Rules of Faith owned.

1. Deliver of it down by *writing*.

2. The giving it down by *Oral* and *practical Tradition*; This he owns, the other he chargeth on Protestants. But we deny either writing or speaking to be Rules or grounds of Faith; acknowledging nothing to be that *Rule* but the will of God written or spoken as we have premised.

premiſed. Writing and ſpeaking we confeſs to be Modes or means of diſcovering Gods will, and no more, yet of theſe there is neceſſary uſe to bring to faith in Chriſt, and convey it to ſucceeding generations. And if the conteſt be about the moſt certain means of preſerving and giving down the Doctrine of Chriſt to Faith, The written word being aſſured to us by God, muſt have greater *Certainty and Infallibillity* than all the tongues of men, eſpecially of *Romiſh Traditionaries*. However he goeth about to challenge it to his Tradition, we ſhall ſee how he proves it.

2. In *Sſ.* 12. 1. He ſuppoſeth the Truth of his Aſſumptions already proved, and ſo his concluſion ſufficiently conſequent to thoſe Adverſaries againſt whom he conteſts for the certainty of his Tradition, in regard they grant that either *Scripture* or *Tradition* muſt be the Rule of Faith.

As to this paſſage let him know.

1. That his Proteſtant Adverſaries do not grant but deny that either *Scripture unſenced*, or *Tradition without the Will of God delivered*, can be the *Rule of Faith*.

2. They deny alſo his aſſumptions, as reſpecting *Popiſh Tradition*, any of them to be True; (with which only he hath to do,) much more, that he hath prov'd them: And for judgment in this caſe, they appeal to the moſt noble and pregnant wits unprejudiced, whom eſpecially

ſpecially he ſeeks to charme.

3. They cannot therefore grant his Concluſion for the certainty of his Popiſh Tradition to be ſufficiently conſequent.

2. He did foreſee this, that more would be expected from him pretending to demonſtrate *Traditions certainty*: Therefore he attempts it from intrinſecal *Mediums*: His argument is thus formed: *That which hath for its Baſis the beſt nature in the univerſe, even Mans, the Flower and End of the Reſt, muſt needs be certain. But Tradition* (ſuppoſe Popiſh) *hath for its Baſis the beſt nature &c.* therefore, *This Tradition muſt needs be certain.* To clear up his propoſition, he doth ſpecifie and commend this beſt nature of Man, by theſe conſiderations of him.

1. He is not in this place conſidered according to his *Moral part*, defectible by original ſin.

2. Neither according to his *Intellectuals* darkly groping in the purſuit of ſcience by reflected thoughts, *&c.*

3, But according to thoſe faculties in him perfectly and neceſſarily ſubject to the operations and ſtroaks of nature; that is, his Eies, Ears, *&c.* whence the direct impreſſions of knowledge as naturally and neceſſarily iſſue from the affecting of thoſe Senſes, as it is to feel heat, cold, pain, *&c.* This is his firſt intrinſecal *Medium* to prove his Traditions certainty.

1, In

1. In the *Examen* of this Demonſtration, we deny both the Propoſition, (For a Baſis of the beſt nature created cannot give certainty unto faith for ſalvation) and the Aſſumption alſo, (For no Tradition eſpecially Popiſh is founded upon the beſt Nature) as will appear in the ſequel. The concluſion then for Traditions certainty is not demonſtrated from the premiſes. To clear the reaſon of our denial, we ſhall animadvert ſome things in the argument.

2. We muſt obſerve, that it is a very ſtrange Man here preſented, whoſe *Nature* is the beſt *Baſis* for Faiths Traditions: How not conſidered in his Moral part? Not a Man of *Morals*, *good* or *bad*? what, nor a Man conceived in his *Intellectuals*, as *Underſtanding*, or *not underſtanding*? Is it only then a *Man of Senſe*? And is his ſenſitive nature the beſt in the univerſe to be the foundation of Faiths certainty by Tradition? How much doth this lift a Man above a Beaſt? Hear and conſider ye noble Chriſtian Ingenies; Is this a man for Faith?

3. We aſſert every man from *Adam* equally infected with Original Corruption, not only in his *Moral part* and diſpoſition, (as the Diſcourſer fixeth it) but alſo in his *Intellectual* and *Senſitive Faculties*; His *reaſon*, *ſeeing*, *hearing*, *handling*, *&c.* are all as defective by original ſin,

as

as his *disposition* to moral good, which, we suppose, he meaneth by his *Moral part*. If in one therefore he is defective or defectible, he is so in all: He hath not therefore the best nature in the universe, it being sinful.

4. We deny expresly that natures stroaks upon senses, can make direct impressions of knowledge unto Faith in any man: How many eies and ears, do receive sensible impressions by *Scriptural and oral* revelation, and yet never come to the true apprehension of the doctrine of Christ?

This impression must be made by an Almighty arm, to make men beleeve. Yet we deny not, but that mans sense is helpful to his understanding in its measure; therefore sights and sounds may be a good means to bring things heard and seen to the understanding: but matters of faith are proper objects of intellectual faculties, if we speak as men.

5. We judge it a brutish assertion, that the *sound* of the *Oral Tradition* of Christs *Doctrine* to eies, or ears, should *make* such impressions of knowledge naturally and necessarily, as the affecting of senses, to feel heat, cold, pain, pleasure, or any other material quality: For these are proper to sense; but the matters of faith far above. Sense takes the sound not the Faith.

6. We

6. We conclude, that neither is mans nature now the best in the Universe since the fall; therefore not according to the *Discourſers* reaſon, a ſufficient Baſis for the Certainty of that Tradition, which by him is pretended to be the Rule of Faith. Man is the ſubject indeed of Faith in his fallen nature: But the Divine nature only is the *Baſis* of his own will, which is truly the Rule of the Creatures faith in him, and through his grace the main impreſſing cauſe of the knowledge of his Chriſt upon the ſouls of men, by means offered to ſenſe and underſtanding for the effecting of the ſame. It is not Man then but God, who is the true Baſis of Traditions certainty, and Faiths infallibility. If this Argument therefore be from an intrinſecal *Medium*, it concludes very weakly as to the *Diſcourſers* purpoſe.

7. We infer further, That (ſuppoſe mans nature in general were the *beſt* in the univerſe,) yet the intire nature of man, cannot be either *Baſis or ſubject* of *Tradition Popiſh*, unleſs all men naturally were *Papiſts* or *Popiſh men*. It is true, that it is a property adæquate to *Man* in his generality to ſpeak, and give out from reaſon *Oral*-Tradition; but it is not ſo appropriated to *Man* as *Man* to ſpeak, or give out *Tradition of Remiſh Faith*. Now this only is the *Diſputers* aim, to found *Popiſh Tradition* upon humane nature; But moſt

miserably doth he mistake the mark, and miscarry in his Demonstration: Seeing falshood as well as Truth, and infidelity as well as Faith, may claim that interest in mans nature, to be as he calleth it, the *Basis* of it; for all are alike delivered down to Posterity by *Mans Oral Tradition*: And mans nature is equally a *Basis* to all, if to any.

3. To strengthen this *Medium*, he adds the frequent impressions of knowledge upon sense, many times every day: Nay more their lives are to be framed by the Precepts they hear, and conformable examples they see: So that Faith comes clad in such plain matters of Fact, that the most stupid man living cannot possibly be ignorant of it.

We must a little inquire into this passage; for it seems very strange.

1. Is this *Tradition* (spoken of) *sine re tradita*, without matter delivered? unto such only the Discourser did pretend before: Then it is a voice, and nothing else, that hath such effectual operation toward Faith; which is insipid and ridiculous.

2. Is the reiteration of such a voice, (suppose) uttering precepts from God unto the sense of hearing 10000 times a day, able to impresse faith or knowledge there? Sense is not capable of it: nor mans voice able to effect it; they do but beat the air.

3. Are

3. Are the lives of all the Traditionary hearers and Seers conformed to precepts and examples, which they hear and see? or if not, Is it the duty of having their lives to be framed, sufficient to bring this Faith unto them, when it is not done? The Disputer (we suppose) will be ashamed to affirm either of them. And is not this also to consider man as to his *Moral part*, when his life is supposed to be conformed to precepts and Examples? which consideration of Man he excluded before, as not pertinent to his demonstration in the present Case.

4. Is Faith comming clad in matters of Fact, sufficient of it self to cause true down-right Christian practise, and influence the most stupid Creatures with knowledge? If he affirm it, we deny it. The Arm of God only can do this.

5. Are the most stupid men living among Papists under an impossibility of being ignorant of Faith, by having their senses, eies, and ears so often affected with their oral, and practical Tradition? The palpable ignorance of thousands of those sottish Creatures, contradict such an Assertion before the *Sun*: They may have knowledge of grosse superstitions impressed on their senses that way, but not of true faith. And not only is it so with them; but to their shame also, may it be spoken, who among protestants, where they hear and

ſee the true faith of Jeſus preached and practiſed daily, do abide in multitudes ignorant of the true faith of the Goſpel. The Diſcourſers demonſtration then is not firm for the certainty of his *Tradition* upon this *Baſis*; notwithſtanding the moſt frequent reiteration of words and practiſe upon their ſenſes.

4. He draweth us to compare, the certainty each Chriſtian Fore-father hath of what he hath practiſ'd all his life with that which a ſworn witneſs in Court hath of what he ſaw and heard but once, thence to multiply, theſe thus-qualified witneſſes, to equal the vaſt total of Chriſtianity; and then to invent what force in natures univerſe is comparable to this inerrability of Tradition. Whence with very great confidence he concludes, that men muſt ceaſe to be men, and nature looſe it ſelf, and by overſtraining crack her ſinews ſooner, than the vaſt Teſtification called Tradition can poſſibly be violated. It muſt therefore unerringly regulate and bring down faith to its followers; whoſe Baſis is ſtronger than all material nature, that is, ſuch a one as was fit for ſupreme wiſedome to lay for faith, being ſo neer and neceſſary means to bring *Mankind* to his Beatitude.

Great ſwelling words of vanity, here packt up together, do not ſcare us from a juſt reply to this pretended Auxiliary unto his

his former Demonſtration; we do therefore thus anſwer.

1. Upon comparing a Chriſtian Forefather with a ſworn witneſs in Court, we find both alike ſubject to Error and obnoxious to miſtakes; which is farr from inerrability avouched hence unto *Tradition*: For it is poſſible, that a ſworn witneſs may miſtake in ſight and hearing; and then his confident ſwearing maketh the matter worſe. No leſſe a Fore-father called Chriſtian, although he be certain of what he hath practiſed, yet all the while may be miſtaken in the matter of Faith, which is true and ſaving, and inſtead thereof imbrace lying vanities and fanſies, and deliver down the ſame for faith unto his Children: neither of theſe enforce an Infallibility. We ought indeed to give much credit to a man ſwearing in the fear of God, and to an honeſt Fore-father, teſtifying what he hath received truely from Chriſt and practiſed; but neither of theſe are inerrable, nor their Teſtimony infallible. And beſides we have juſt cauſe to ſuſpect, the Forefathers intended by the *Diſcourſer* to be no ſuch witneſſes as theſe.

2. We will multiply theſe thus qualified witneſſes according to the juſt Rule of their multiplication, that is, of them in their proper kind: Now if this Diſputer will ſpeak out he muſt tell us, that

the Fore-father Christian, which he mentioned, must be a *Papist*, for no other Christianity doth he contend; therefore in multiplying as he desireth, it must be within the verge and compass of this Christianity, that we shall deal with him about a Testimony to his *Tradition*. We shall therefore to avoid all fallacious dealings in this matter, consider Tradition.

1. As humane and natural.

2. As truly Christian and spiritual with respect to the matters delivered.

3. As meerly Popish as to the matters singly given down by them as *Papists*; and so we shall determine the matter in these Propositions, as to multiplying.

1. We shall multiply witnesses qualified concerning humane natural things unto the *vast Total of Mankind*, and we determine, that their continued Tradition in these matters within their sphere, may carry much certainty in many things, proved every day by experience: but yet not in all things, within the compass of Nature; neither for all this is this Tradition, which concerns all Mankind unerrable.

2. We will multiply the qualified witnesses of true Christian Doctrine descended from Christ, unto the total of true Christianity, or of Christians indeed, be it great or small; and we conclude, that their Tradition, so farre as they follow Christ

Christ uninterruptedly is certain, as any can be in the universe; yet as men and in themselves are they not infallible: They are certain and so to be trusted as farre as Christ speaketh in them, which also must be tryed by the Scripture.

3. We shall multiply the Authors *Popish Fore-fathers*, whom he stileth Christian, unto the *vast Total of Papists*; and then without any labour of Invention, we deny all *Inerrability in their Tradition*, which is the *Rule of their Faith*; and by comparing do assert, there is much more force within the compass of the Universe as to testifying to the Truth of Christ, than *Romish Tradition*, which is the matter only intended by this *Disputer*, under the general notion of *Tradition*, where he hides his plot, Nay we again affirm, there is nothing else, but error and errability in that *Tradition* pretended to come from Christ. So that hereby notwithstanding proud vain words, there is no fear of denying men to be men, nor of Natures cracking her sinews, by overstraining and loosing her self; the greatest danger is of proving *Popish Tradition* to be Delusion; and poor Papists to be deceived and misguided from the true faith of Christ, by their blind Fore-fathers, who about matters of Faith (which he commends) testifie by sense only.

3. We expresly deny, that ever the supreme wisdome of the Almighty laid this *Tradition as a Basis for Faith*, or determined it as a means so near and necessary to bring Mankind to their Beatitude; however the *Discourser* presumptuously say, that his *Romish Tradition* is such a one as was fit for supreme wisedome to lay. Dares *Rome* fit a foundation of Faith for God to lay? She hath framed her own *Tradition* to convey her filthiness down; and here a Son of hers judgeth it fit for God to lay it as a *Basis of Faith*. Yet how can this *Disputer* say, that his Traditions foundation is stronger then all materjal nature, seeing he pitcheth it on mans senses? which are most external, and belong mostly to his material part. Thus he is in and out. We acknowledge Divine wisdome hath laid himself only the Foundation of Faith in Christ Jesus, and hath appointed true *Scriptural and Oral-Tradition*, as concurrent means to bring men to Faith, and to blessedness by it: and here we fix, desiring to walk in this way.

4. We conclude from all, that Popish Tradition is not able unerringly to regulate its followers, let them be never so exact, nor bring down true faith unto them; for it is not of God. The *Discourser* therefore, hath not acquitted himself of his undertaking to demonstrate the *certainty* of his *Tradition* by *intrinsecal medums*.

diums. No such thing hath he done in the premiſes; Therefore his 6th Condition is not made good by him; and then all the reſt which he builds upon this, muſt fail by his own Conceſſion. This is all the Demonſtration, which hitherto he hath made; and indeed it is none at all to ſtrengthen his Tradition; but he hath made it weaker, and expoſed it to ruine by the leaſt rational Batteries.

3. In purſuance yet of his deſign. *S.* 13. He will not neglect to remind us of the Evidenceableneſs of Traditions Ruling power: That while the next Age beleeveth and practiſeth as the former Age did, thoſe of the latter Age are ſtill of the ſame Faith with the former, as it is, that *to believe the ſame, is to believe the ſame*: Only he is Cautelous not to prove *idem per idem*, the *ſame by the ſame.*

We ſhall ſhortly return.

1. This would have been no wonder in this *Diſcourſer*, who elſewhere runs round in a circle between his *Church and his Tradition*, proving them each by other, as Cauſes one of another.

2. We will not neglect to remind him alſo of the anſwer already given upon that account; which may be enough for him to review.

3. We ſhall only adde, that if the former age do miſbelieve, then they, who follow their Tradition, muſt miſbelieve alſo

alſo: So that Tradition is as ſure a rule of error and miſbelief, as it is of Faith and Truth; ſo long as it is taken by it ſelf abſtractly without the matter delivered in it. This is no ſingular property then for Tradition to be the Rule of Faith or means unto it, as he promiſcuouſly calleth it. Where then appears yet the certainty of Tradition fit for the Rule of Faith? The Author therefore hath more to do, then to open terms and explicate the propoſition; for neceſſity lyeth on him to prove the certainty of his Tradition, which yet he hath not proved as to Faith.

4. In *S.* 14. He challengeth the moſt Sceptical Diſſenter to muſter all the *Caprichoes* of *Fanſie*, &c. And the moſt obſtinate and acute Adverſaries to whet their wits to that degree of ſharpneſs: as to be able to penetrate with nice diſtinctions *&c.* What can they ſay in this caſe? If they argue it muſt be from knowledge, this muſt be from things; the beſt thing is mans nature, and that is ingaged for the certainty of Tradition: But their proper task is to looſe two notions, which perfect Identity binds (ſuppoſe *Certainty* and *Tradition*) and to blunder that Truth, which the noon-daies Sun of ſelf-evidence diſcovers, *&c.*

If bold Bravadoes or daring words will do it, ſurely the *Diſcourſer* will bear away the Bell, and level all to his own Tradition; It is well we know words are but

but wind, and ſo let them blow over. Our work is to ſearch the bottom of the matter, and weigh his reaſon.

1. We may without offence inquire of this *Diſcourſer*; Have his Scepticks no more but *Caprichoes* of fanſie againſt his Tradition to ſuggeſt; and yet had they ſo many real and rational doubts againſt the Scripture of God? or, have the obſtinate and acute Adverſaries, not an Argument againſt his Tradition, but are put to ſuch a ſtrait as to looſe thoſe two notions, which perfect Identity binds; or all they can ſay muſt avail nothing? Or muſt we not complain, that the Diſputer is partial? who could put ſo many doubts and objections into their mouths againſt the Scripture; and not one againſt his Tradition. We leave it to his Ingenuity to conſider: It is no fair dealing.

2. Let us therefore ſuppoſe his Sceptick and obſtinate Adverſary urging thus againſt his Tradition, which poſſibly he may hear.

1. The one moveth his doubts againſt Romiſh Tradition after this manner; Is there not much more fallibility, in what Popiſh Fore-fathers give to their children, than in that Teſtimony which God commanded to be written, and is his very word, as acknowledged by the Trent-Confederates themſelves? Is it not poſſible that the Diſcourſers Father or Teacher might

might delude him? and he be deluded by his Fore-father? and ſo thorough the Popiſh line, might they not all be ſeduced from Father to Child? How can the *Diſcourſer* know but that the Tradition of other Mediators beſides Jeſus Chriſt, might be from the Devil? And the Tradition of Righteouſneſs by mens own good works added to Chriſts ſatisfaction, may fall under the Apoſtles *Anathema*? If any, or an Angel from Heaven preach, *&c.* Let it be accurſed. Nay how can the Method of Popiſh Tradition be the Rule of Faith which delivereth down ſo many Fables and lyes; as *Popes Supremacy*, *Tranſubſtantion* of bread into the fleſh or humane nature of Chriſt, born of the bleſſed virgin, (a monſtrous Chimæra) with multitudes of ſuch like abſurdities? Who can acknowledge that Tradition, which giveth down ſuch things to be the Rule of Faith? Senſe and Reaſon do abhorre them.

Gal. 1. 8, 9.

2. The obſtinate and acute Adverſary moreover will tell this *Diſcourſer* more ſmartly; That *Romiſh* Tradition of faith by Popiſh Fore-fathers, is from the Devil; that its Riſe was with the *Myſterie of Iniquity*; that the Romiſh Church is *Myſtery-Babylon the great*, *the Mother of Harlots*; that *the Pope is the Apocalyptical Beaſt and Falſe Prophet*, that *Antichriſt*, *and Son of Perdition*; That by the Hypocryſie of them who continually have told lies

lies in their Traditions, all ſpiritual filthines, Idolatry, and Apoſtaſie, have been conveied down to the preſent generation of Papiſts: yea and all this he hath proved, and will prove againſt them. Are all theſe doubts and objections only *Caprichoes* of Fanſie, or *Quirks* of wit, or vain and groundleſs Oppoſitions? The Diſcourſer may talk ſo, of that which he cannot anſwer. His *Deiſt* whom he brought in cavilling againſt the Faith of Scripture, hath much more to ſay againſt the Faith of his Tradition, would he but let him ſpeak freely, but here he kept him ſilent, as if engaged unto his Cauſe.

3. If the Diſcourſer ſay they miſtake him, becauſe he ſpeaks only of the method of Tradition, not of the matters delivered; Surely he miſtakes himſelf, for he pleads for the *Rule of Faith*; and Faith then muſt be ruled thereby, which is the matter delivered; to divide theſe is to ſeparate unſeparable things. Beſides his Adverſaries grant Oral-Tradition to be a means certainly conveying Truth and falſhood: and therefore deny its appropriation unto Faith. In ſumme they ſay, as *Tradition* is one *means* to convey *matters of Faith*, ſo the matters delivered do ſpecifie the *Tradition* to be good or *bad*: So that if ſuch foul things be given down by his *Method of Tradition*, this alſo muſt be filthineſs it ſelf.

4. His

might delude him? and he be deluded by his Fore-father? and so thorough the Popish line, might they not all be seduced from Father to Child? How can the *Discourser* know but that the Tradition of other Mediators besides Jesus Christ, might be from the Devil? And the Tradition of Righteousness by mens own good works added to Christs satisfaction, may fall under the Apostles *Anathema*? If any, or an Angel from Heaven preach, *&c.* Let it be accursed. Nay how can the Method of Popish Tradition be the Rule of Faith which delivereth down so many Fables and lyes; as *Popes Supremacy*, *Transubstantion* of bread into the flesh or humane nature of Christ, born of the blessed virgin, (a monstrous Chimæra) with multitudes of such like absurdities? Who can acknowledge that Tradition, which giveth down such things to be the Rule of Faith? Sense and Reason do abhorre them.

Gal. 1. 8, 9.

2. The obstinate and acute Adversary moreover will tell this *Discourser* more smartly; That *Romish* Tradition of faith by Popish Fore-fathers, is from the Devil; that its Rise was with the *Mysteries of Iniquity*; that the Romish Church is *Mystery-Babylon the great, the Mother of Harlots*; that *the Pope is the Apocalyptical Beast and False Prophet*, that *Antichrist, and Son of Perdition*; That by the Hypocrysie of them who continually have told lies

lies in their Traditions, all ſpiritual filthines. Idolatry, and Apoſtaſie, have been conveied down to the preſent generation of Papiſts: yea and all this he hath proved, and will prove againſt them. Are all theſe doubts and objections only *Caprichoes* of Fanſie, or *Quirks* of wit, or vain and groundleſs Oppoſitions? The Diſcourſer may talk ſo, of that which he cannot anſwer. His *Deiſt* whom he brought in cavilling againſt the Faith of Scripture, hath much more to ſay againſt the Faith of his Tradition, would he but let him ſpeak freely, but here he kept him ſilent, as if engaged unto his Cauſe.

3. If the Diſcourſer ſay they miſtake him, becauſe he ſpeaks only of the method of Tradition, not of the matters delivered; Surely he miſtakes himſelf, for he pleads for the *Rule of Faith*; and Faith then muſt be ruled thereby, which is the matter delivered; to divide theſe is to ſeparate unſeparable things. Beſides his Adverſaries grant Oral-Tradition to be a means certainly conveying Truth and falſhood: and therefore deny its appropriation unto Faith. In ſumme they ſay, as *Tradition* is one *means* to convey *matters of Faith*, ſo the matters delivered do ſpecifie the *Tradition* to be good or *bad*: So that if ſuch foul things be given down by his *Method of Tradition*, this alſo muſt be filthineſs it ſelf.

4. His

4. His Adversaries therefore see no such task incumbent on them as to loose those two notions which perfect Identity binds; for *Tradition and Certainty* are not so united; The noon-daies Sun would discover this to him, but that he is blinded with his own self-conceit, hugging his new Invention. Let him injoy it.

5. In *S.* 15. He gathers up from his premises his general conclusion: Taking for granted, that all his seven Properties of the Rule of Faith, do peculiarly belong to his Tradition, and that they are incompetent to any Competitor, he concludes in his own Judgment thus, That,

Tradition is the Rule of Faith.

For a closing answer to this Discourse.

1. We deny that any of these Conditions, as rightly understood, are proper to his *Tradition*, which is *Popish*; or that he hath in the least measure proved, or made it good. And this we leave to impartial Readers to judge.

2. We offer it to observation, that the highest Demonstration, which he hath attempted to give thus farre of any particular Property hath its strength only from *Man*, whose nature he stileth the best in the *Vniverse*: And yet at the best is but frail and wavering and perishing.

3. As to all other properties of an higher descent, and more necessary *Ally* to the *Rule of Faith*, he passeth them by, as not fit

to

to be considered in the present case, or not worthy it. Yet must he know that nothing can be the Rule of Faith without them. *As Supremacy*, *Rectitude*, *Commensurateness* with the matter ruled, *and Indivisibility*, that nothing can be taken from it, or added to it; we expect these to be *reciprocal* with that which is the *Rule of Faith*, if not, we shall not yield it so to be. These then and the rest being not so peculiar unto his Tradition, his main Conclusion is denied.

Tradition is not the Rule of Faith.

1. Not general humane Tradition, for this medleth not with Faith at all.

2. Not his special or Popish Tradition, for that falsifieth and corrupteth the true faith of the Gospel, as hath been hinted.

3. Not true Christian Oral-Tradition, as it notes only the *mode* of delivering down faith, without *the matter* delivered, which is the *will of God*, *the only Rule or Ground of Faith* unto Salvation. What a due and necessary means God hath made it to beget faith, hath been declared, and granted. The Discourser then may silence his boasting, untill he acquit himself and his Tradition better. That he promiseth himself in the sequel by a fuller demonstration: we shall go on to try his performance.

THE

THE

Sixth Diſcourſe

EXAMINED.

THe Title of this Diſcourſe tells us, it is an *Endeavour to demonſtrate à Priori the Indefectibleneſs of Tradition.* Wherein we have.

1. His Preface, *Sſ.* 1, 2, 3.——2. His Demonſtration, *S.* 5.——3. His anſwer to ſome Objections, *Sſ.* 6, 7, 8. All are to be conſidered orderly.

1. In his preface he brings in ſome, commending his former diſcourſes: but withall queſtioning; Was this Tradition held to? Who began to deſert that Rule? Whoever held to it? or Was it ever held to by any? *Sſ.* 1.

2. He chargeth the Proteſtants to make this labour of his further demonſtration needleſs, being caſt in their Cauſe, *&c. S.* 2.

3. He makes a needleſs digreſſion, about an Exaction upon his Rule. *S.* 3.

4. He promiſeth a double demonſtration of his Concluſion, *S.* 4.

All

All this might have been better ſpared and the Diſcourſer might have fallen cloſely to his Demonſtration; which would have advantaged him more, and leſſe burdened his Readers with a multitude of needleſs words. We will not follow him at his Range, but ſhortly animadvert upon the ſpecial Heads. Commend his Diſcourſes they who can: We ſhall onely reply to the Queres. Suppoſing Tradition twofold. 1. General of all things.

2. Special of Faith. And theſe two under the notions, either of the *manner* of delivery, or *Matter* delivered by it. And then we return to them thus.

1. None did ever queſtion, or doubt, but that alwaies by ſpeech all things have been derived from the Fathers to the Children; neither could this ever be deſerted; by the law nature.

2. Conſidering this *Mode* of Tradition carrying in it matters of Faith, which here the *Diſcourſer* owns as delivered by the Apoſtles, we ſay many did deſert their Doctrine of Faith, while they ſurvived; and all the continued deſerters of the ſame Truth in all Ages ſince, are of the ſame ſtock.

3. They only held to the Apoſtles Tradition of Faith by preaching, who kept cloſe to the ſame doctrine written by them and to none beſides it: and by ſuch it was and is held unto at this day. *S.* 1.

4. The Discourser hath not prov'd evidently that *Romish Tradition* is a certain *Rule of Faith*, and Scripture not. His fallacious treating upon *Tradition* in general, and Scriptures letter, are but *senseless gingles*; for neither is the one denied its due place, nor the other at all affirmed by the Protestants: Therefore are they not cast in their Cause, as he vainly cryeth out.

5. They assert true Tradition-oral of Christs Doctrine in its true use; and prove that Papists have fallen from that Rule, by the undeniable effects of that Apostasie in Doctrines expresly contrary to that of Christs and his Apostles, maintained by them to this day; which is enough to make them blush and be ashamed; but that a *Roman* face is steeled against such modest reflexions. The matter delivered if evil, spoileth the method of delivering, be it never so good.

6. The Discourser forgets himself to be an *Adversary* to, while he takes upon himself to be a Judge over Protestants; but to his Censure they reply.

1. They do not in the least tacitely yeeld the Doctrine held by the *Romish Church*, to be of Faith, uninterruptedly come down from the Apostles, or that it was ever and is Christs Doctrine. They do openly and lowdly deny it; neither were ever any of their Jesuitical Champi-

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ons able to disprove them. If so, let the Author produce them: We grant the derivation of Christs Doctrine downwards by Tradition *Oral* and Scriptural, in all things concurring; but Popish *Oral-Tradition* we abhorre as much as that abhors the Scripture of God. This is a fooliſh Cenſure then by the Diſputer.

2. They appeal to God againſt the blinding of their Conſciences with glances of Fancy from private Interpretations of Gods word, or deafning their ears with falſe Ecchoes from thoſe ſacred Oracles, who is their righteous Judge, and will determine the Cauſe between Proteſtants and Papiſts: who they be that lye againſt God, and who that maintain his Truth, in his appointed time. In the interim, the Diſcourſer had need to remember that he muſt appear himſelf at the judgment ſeat of Chriſt, and be certainly judged, for all thoſe hard and ungodly reproaches caſt upon the Scriptures of God under pretence of honouring them. Woe be to them at that day who ſhall then be found guilty of drawing away ſouls from the faith of God manifeſted in the fleſh unto other *Dæmon-Mediators* by the hypocriſie of them who give down *lying Traditions*. Their Conſciences will be found to have been ſeared with an hot iron. Let him and his be afraid of this judgment, *S.* 2.

4. The Diſcourſer hath not prov'd evidently that *Romiſh Tradition* is a certain *Rule of Faith*, and Scripture not. His fallacious treating upon *Tradition* in general, and Scriptures letter, are but *ſenſeleſs gingles*; for neither is the one denied its due place, nor the other at all affirmed by the Proteſtants: Therefore are they not caſt in their Cauſe, as he vainly cryeth out.

5. They aſſert true Tradition oral of Chriſts Doctrine in its true uſe; and prove that Papiſts have fallen from that Rule, by the undeniable effects of that Apoſtaſie in Doctrines expreſly contrary to that of Chriſts and his Apoſtles, maintained by them to this day; which is enough to make them bluſh and be aſhamed; but that a *Roman* face is ſteeled againſt ſuch modeſt reflexions. The matter delivered if evil, ſpoileth the method of delivering, be it never ſo good.

6. The Diſcourſer forgets himſelf to be an *Adverſary* to, while he takes upon himſelf to be a Judge over Proteſtants; but to his Cenſure they reply.

1. They do not in the leaſt tacitely yeeld the Doctrine held by the *Romiſh Church*, to be of Faith, uninterruptedly come down from the Apoſtles, or that it was ever and is Chriſts Doctrine. They do openly and lowdly deny it; neither were ever any of their Jeſuitical Champi-

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ons able to disprove them. If so, let the Author produce them: We grant the derivation of Christs Doctrine downwards by Tradition *Oral* and Scriptural, in all things concurring; but Popish *Oral Tradition* we abhorre as much as that abhors the Scripture of God. This is a foolish Censure then by the Disputer.

2. They appeal to God against the blinding of their Consciences with glances of Fancy from private Interpretations of Gods word, or deafning their ears with false Ecchoes from those sacred Oracles, who is their righteous Judge, and will determine the Cause between Protestants and Papists: who they be that lye against God, and who that maintain his Truth, in his appointed time. In the interim, the Discourser had need to remember that he must appear himself at the judgment seat of Christ, and be certainly judged, for all those hard and ungodly reproaches cast upon the Scriptures of God under pretence of honouring them. Woe be to them at that day who shall then be found guilty of drawing away souls from the faith of God manifested in the flesh unto other *Damon-Mediators* by the hypocrisie of them who give down *lying Traditions*. Their Consciences will be found to have been seared with an hot iron. Let him and his be afraid of this judgment, *S.* 2.

7. In S. 3. It is hard to say what the *Discourser* aimeth at; for it may well be put in a Parenthesis as not necessary to this Discourse. Yet we shall say something to it.

1. It is no unreasonable expectation that the *Rule of Faith* should both order its Followers, and oblige them not to desert it: So God hath established his Rule in the Holy Scriptures.

2. The goodness of our Saviour is not to found his Rule of Faith upon mans nature, but upon God himself, that it may be able to rule Souls unto life, and oblige them firmly unto Faith.

3. It is no less the justice of the Lord to suffer an Efficacy of Delusion to go along with Popish Tradition, to spread that Religion under the name of Christian. And having thus replyed to these things in his Preface, we shall expect his promise of a double demonstration, which he giveth, *S.* 4.

2. He enters upon his first *a Priori*. *S.* 5. Here he would have us pick out his demonstration from four Grounds laid down by him.

1. *That Christian Doctrine was at first unanimously settled by the Apostles in the hearts of the Faithful in great multitudes over several parts of the world.*

2. *That this Doctrine was firmly beleeved by them to be the way to Heaven, and the contradictory*

dictory to it the way unto Damnation.

3. *That hopes of goods (as Heavenly) and Fears of harms, (as Damnation) strongly applyed, are the Causes of Actual Will.*

4. *That the thing was feasible, that whatever they were bred to, was knowable by them.* All this put as his *Medium*, his Conclusion is. That it followeth as certainly, a great Body of the first Believers, and After-faithful in each Age, that is, from Age to Age, would continue to hold themselves and teach their Children, as themselves had been taught, that is that they should follow and stick to Tradition; as it doth, that a Cause put actually causing, produceth its Effect.

1. This is somewhat an obscure way of Demonstration; It had been plainer and shorter to have given it in three propositions, so more easily might we have seen the strength of his conclusion: We shall to help the Readers more clearly to judge in this matter, contract it, and put it under view together. His conclusion pretended by him to be inferred is, *The Indefectibleness or Actual indefectiveness of Tradition from Christ and his Apostles.* (Suppose of the Romish Faith or Religion, as it is gathered into a systeme by his Trent-Fathers, and is now received and practic'd by Papists) For this is the only thing contended for by him in all his Discourses: Otherwise that Oral-Tradition of humane concernments is from the begin-

ning indefective actually and indefectible so long as mankind is in being on earth, must be yielded by all. His *Medium* to conclude this must be gathered out of his 4 grounds, or at least the proof of it: The whole together must be thus formed. *That Doctrine of Faith, which was at first delivered by Christ and his Apostles, and firmly beleeved by all the Faithful in that Age, and willed and known by all the Faithful in all succeeding Generations to this very Age, is actually Indefective from the time of Christ.* But,

The Traditional Doctrine of Faith compiled in the Trent-Canons, and as now beleeved and practised in the bulk of it by Papists at this day, is that which at first Christ delivered, &c. Therefore

This Traditionall Doctrine of Faith received and practised by Papists at this day, is actually indefective from the time of Christ.

In this demonstrative Syllogism according to the *Discourſers* platform laid, we peremptorily deny the Assumption: which if he can prove, we yield his Conclusion; but as soon may he prove darkness to be light, and Hell to be Heaven. And untill he perform this Task, we judge his Demonstration, but a *Quibble*, not worthy of a farther answer. No actual Indefectiveness, then much lesse indefectibility from Christ, is made good to Popish Tradition, which is this Disputers Rule of Faith.

1. As

1. As to what he may conceive of proof lying in his grounds, we ſhall grant what is to be granted, which will avail him nothing; and except againſt the reſt.

1. We grant that the ſound of the Apoſtles Doctrine went into all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. So alſo was the ſame delivered in their writings and Epiſtles; Each Tradition was of equal account with them. Rom. 10. 18.

2. We except that however they delivered this Doctrine to their ears and to their eies; yet they could not ſettle it in their hearts; for then no Apoſtates had been in thoſe daies: This was a work for Gods ſpirit only. Neither indeed was this Gods way to propagate truth to others; for it was a ſecret work which none could know but ſuch as had it. The means of conveying Goſpel Doctrine muſt be viſible, as preaching and writing, ſuch as work upon ſenſes, which the Author contends for under the notion of a *Rule*. It may be therefore perhaps his meaning, that thoſe multitudes did learn the Apoſtles Doctrine by heart, that is, without book, which beſt ſuiteth with his Tradition to teach their Children by heart: but this is poor Heart-work unto ſalvation. This makes no more for his *Indefectiveneſs*, than to note the Term only from whence it muſt begin; Take it all in the ſoundeſt Sence. 2 Cor. 3. 3

2. As to his second ground.

1. We grant it fully as concerning them, who were truly faithful, that they did beleeve Christs Doctrine to be the way to Heaven, and the deserting of it the way to damnation; and that the hopes of Heaven, and fears of Hell impressed upon their minds by divine Authority, did make not only the first Believers, but all truly faithful in all Ages following to adhere to that Doctrine of Christ, and did deterr them from the relinquishing of it.

2. Yet we deny all them to be truly faithful, who professedly in the first and following times received this Doctrine; neither did hopes of Heaven nor fears of Hell keep many from forsaking the Truth of Christ in the times of the Apostles; for there were multitudes of Apostates from it under the Mystery of Iniquity in those daies; And no lesse were in Ages following, when the Apostasie grew stronger, notwithstanding therefore these hopes and fears many might and did fall from the Faith. This step then in the Discourser's *Climax* for his Demonstration is but feeble: And it doth concern him to study more seriously whether the Romish Apostasie took not rise from the worse and failing party then, which hath been charged and proved against them. His Indefective Tradition must then fail him, unless it

it be from Apostate Professors in that Age

3. As to his next ground. 1. We grant that Hopes of Goods, and Fears of Harms, are objective Causes of actual will, and no more; for they move the will to chuse and to refuse.

2. We add further, that the strength of Application of these objects, whether in matters natural, or spiritual unto the will, must be to victory over all repulses, to actuate the will unto its office of chusing, or refusing.

3. That in spiritual matters the Application must be made to mans will by the Arm of God, or else Heaven will never keep them close to the way of Truth, nor Hell, ever deterr them from relinquishing it; nor actuate will to a regular choice or refusal. Now the Event in those first times plainly shews, that hopes of Heaven and fears of Hell, did not actuate the wills of beleevers to adhere to Christs saving Doctrine, nor terrifie them from relinquishing it; for many fell away, notwithstanding the strength of those *Motives*, because they were not applyed by the Power of God. Which being so, the *Discourser* had need mind this role of his Ladder also, or else it will crack and not bear his Traditional Fore-fathers in bringing down his Traditionary faith to this Age: For he can never prove that their wills were acted by God upon thoughts of Heaven

or

or Hell to bring down the Truth of Christ unto their Posterity, seeing his *Trent-Canons* contain so many falshoods contrary to the same.

4. To his last ground. 1. It may be yeelded, that it was in their power (God vouchsafing them natural understandings) to know literally the Doctrine of Christ and his Apostles, and yet not in their power to stand to it.

2. We deny nevertheless that it was in the power of all those multitudes pretended savingly to know the Doctrine of Christ, unless those onely who were taught of God, and upon whose wills his own Arm had made impression of his motives to keep them fixed to the truth of the Gospel. Now seeing there were so many deficient in saving knowledge both of former and latter times; It will be a very hard matter for the *Discourser* to draw out from these premised grounds, a certain conclusion of his Traditions *Indefectiveness* or *Indefectibility*, from the Truth of Christ, to the false Religion of *Rome* at this day: *Idem jungat vulpes & mulgeat hircos.* The same *wild Foxes then may coat, And milk the Romish Goat.* Yet let us look forward and see what way he will make in clearing up the objections proposed by himself.

3. He

3. He now cometh to satisfie objectors out of his foresight, and so he hopes to clear his Demonstration.

1. He saith, *The indisposition of the wills of beleeving Parents, by reason of Original Corruption*, may be objected as a cause hindering them from a faithful delivery of Christs Truth down unto their Children. Unto which he attempts to give satisfaction. *S.* 6. To avoid transcribing of words we shall animadvert upon his answer and reply.

1. That we grant freely Christs Doctrine was intended to be an Antidote against that original malice, and an help to preserve mens minds and wills right and pure: For he was manifested to destroy the works of the Devil; of which that was the first and worst.

2. We doubt not, but that the Gospel of the Son of God did heal the corrupt natures of many to whom God applyed it by his special Grace: Therefore Christs wisdome is not questioned as if the means appointed by him were not fit to do the Effect. But when this *Discourser* minds us of many thousands of Martyrs and holy Confessors, who by the Power of this Doctrine overcame this inbred declivity of their wills; we may as justly remind him of so many millions, to whom the sound of it came, whose natures were never healed, nor wills rectified by it. And besides 1 Joh. 3. 8.

ſides we deny that his Traditionary fore-fathers, as to his *Trent-Doctrine*, were ſuch Martyrs and Confeſſors whoſe wills were ſo cured: And we leave it upon him to prove it,

3. We deny that this Doctrine of Chriſt was delivered by the beſt willed ſouls only by *Oral*, but alſo by Scriptural Tradition, againſt both which neither the ſtratagems of the Devil, nor the gates of Hell did or could prevail.

4. We add that however weak the Diſputer may think Original ſin to be, yet it inclineth to all malignity againſt God, and Apoſtaſie from the Truth of Chriſt: but much more when Parents are to be ſuppoſed to have improved that root of bitterneſs by bringing forth many bitter fruits in Actual ſins, habituating themſelves unto backſlidings from God; and then it will not be ſo hard for him to grant they might be ſo vicious as to ſeduce their Children.

5. Although we are willing to think, no Parents ſhould be ſo unnatural, to teach their children, what they think will damn them; Yet we ſhall offer to him ſome Experiments which are undeniable.

1. There have been Parents who have offered their children to the Devil; ſuch therefore may be at this day. 2. Parents bewitched themſelves, are moſt apt to faſcinate

ſcinate their Children to idol-worſhip, *&c.* A Father-theef uſually teacheth his Son to be a Theef, though he knows the end will be the Gallows. When the blind do lead the blind, they will both fall into the ditch. Nay nothing is more evident, than that Parents bred up in ſuperſtitious and idolatrous waies, will force their Children to be of the ſame Religion, that if themſelves be damned, they ſhall be damned with them. And to this efficacious deluſion God hath given up them, who loved not his *Scripture-Truth.* No greater Example of it than in *Rome.*

5. Theſe things being thus ſtated, how hath the *Diſcourſer* quitted himſelf of the firſt objection? The Tradition of *Romiſh* Faith is notwithſtanding deſcended from minds and wills, not only not healed by the Goſpel, but more perniciouſly infected with wilfull and obſtinate falſhood againſt the written Truth of Chriſt.

2. The next objection is, *That the fickle nature of the will, may exempt her from the Law of Cauſes.* Whereupon he makes ſome Queries, to which we ſhall anſwer.

1. We grant that *good* is the object of the will, and doth affect it when it is ſufficiently applied: Natural good to natural will, and ſpiritual good to ſpiritual will.

We

2. We aſſert Temporal goods and harms, do more affect natural wills than all Spiritual: Experience ſheweth it, men uſually preſer temporal rewards before heaven, and fear bodily puniſhments more than hell; ſuch wills are fickle.

3. His world of Beleevers we take for the multitude of his *Popiſh Fore-fathers*, and their wills were carried under blind, ſuperſtitious minds, to forſake the Truth of Chriſt, and ſo to ſeduce Poſterity; notwithſtanding the loſs of infinite goods, and gain of infinite Harms. Such wills are no Cauſes of conveying down the Truth of Chriſt. In all this nothing ſtrengthens his demonſtration.

3. The laſt knot which he would untie, is That the Objector doth *fault the Application of theſe motives to the Wills of his Traditionary Fore-fathers; and then their wills may fail in doing their office.* What his reply is, we ſhall weigh and anſwer.

The Diſcourſer may put his Teeth and nails to untye this knot, and all to no purpoſe; For that which is a ſufficient application of theſe ſpiritual motives to mens wills, ſo as to make them faithful in giving down Truth, muſt needs convert them, and make them of fleſh, ſpirit. Now all applications from humane ſtrength are not able to change mans will; It muſt be Gods arm alone, that can ſo effectually

apply

apply the foresaid motives. Leaving therefore his Reflection upon pursuit of ends proposed by undoubted Authority, and his needless illustrations of it by a King preparing for Expedition, or a Gentleman travelling to *Rome*, we fall upon his proof of a sufficient application of these motives, which we find to be mostly humane, and only his last instance any whit ingaging God; To all he urgeth we thus reply.

1. VVe observe, he gathers his sufficiency of application from humane means, which we deny to be sufficient to actuate mans will into regular working; and this in 5 particulars.

1. The proposal of *Gods supremely-fallible veracity* from man to man, is not sufficient to turn the will truly to close with Truth; for then it would have been done upon all that heard Christ and his Apostles preach it.

2. The representation of these infinite goods by most familiar *Metaphors, venerable Sacraments or the spectable Majesty of Ceremonies* (nay of *Romish* themselves) is no sufficient application to move the will to close with the Truth of Christ. These are weak operatives from men when they are true; but pernicious when adulterate as in *Rome*.

3. The

3. The Applications of theſe goods in the *Viſibility of the words being made fleſh*, was not ſufficient to change mens wills unto the choice of Truth; for then all among whom he Tabernacled, would have choſen him and cleaved to him. Unleſs the *Diſcourſer* think the ſetting of him forth by *Crucifixes* or *Popiſh Pageantry* may do more; which is ſome of the ſpawn of his Tradition. Theſe turn hearts to Satan.

4. The Application of theſe goods by Examples in courſe of life and actions and outward ſhews, is not ſufficient to turn wills unto the truth of Chriſt. Long experience makes this good. Indeed if the miſteries of God were *mechanical* and *maniable* (as he makes them) he might have hope to make many of that Trade. It may be ſo with Papiſts.

5. All the frequent and efficacious application *of theſe eternal goods and harms by Education under Parents and by the Diſcipline and œconomy of the Church is not ſufficient to change wills to God: It was not ſo to all under the Apoſtles government, it was leſs in after ages; but not at all in that* Romiſh Church, for which the *Diſcourſer* contends; nay they harden wills againſt God. In all theſe he hath not cured the faulting of his Application. The knot is made faſter.

6. In

6. In the last place he offers something worth consideration indeed, if he could prove it to his purpose, *Christianity urg'd to execution, gives its Followers a new life, and a new nature; than which a nearer application cannot be imagin'd.* This is application sufficient indeed of these motives to the regeneration of men; for this must change the will: but none can so urge Doctrine, but God himself. Yet if this be made serviceable to the mans turn, he must prove.

1. That this Doctrine preacht by the Apostles with urgency, did give a new life to all their professed followers.

2. That the multitudes thus regenerated by the Apostles, did give this new nature to their followers.

3. That these also did give a new life by their Doctrine to the Generation Following, and so successively to all the forefathers of him and Papists unto this day. But all yours is false; and impossible to be made good. For the huge gulf made between the Apostles doctrine and Application, and Popish doctrine with their application, will never suffer this to arise from that, or consist with it. The Testimony of several Centuries concerning the wicked doctrine and beastly lives both of Popes and Papists, will sufficiently demonstrate, that Christian Doctrine was never so applyed to them, as to make them

new creatures. If this Tradition hath, it must needs send forth sad swarms or multitudes of such Christians among them to the worlds end. Thus we have the strength of his first Demonstration. A further clearing we are promised in the next discourse.

THE

Seventh Discourse

EXAMINED.

About an Objection cleared.

IN this Discourse the summe may be taken in 3 Heads general.

1. An objection and proposed answered. *Sect.* 1.

2. An Elucidation of the answer by stating the rise of Heresie. *Sect.* 2. 3. 4.—

3. A close excusing this *Parergon*, by the usefulness of it. *Sect* 5.

1. The Objection formed by him, may run thus, *There have been actually many Hereticks or Deserters of Tradition*, therefore *Tradition must needs have been defective and interrupted.* We

We understanding this Tradition to be of the Primitive Doctrine of Christ, (whether it be *Oral* or *Scriptural*) do grant the *Antecedent*, There have been many *Heretical Deserters* of that Tradition which the *Discourser* cannot deny; *however* he would wave the Consequence as concluding against his Dæmon. But we yeeld the whole Argument, and shall maintain it.

1. The Antecedent is verified all along, since that Man of sin, and son of perdition was revealed, who exalted himself above the Σεβασθ, or *Augusti*, and sat in the *Temple of God*, shewing himself that *he was God*. Thus his *Universal Head* hath done; and he and his Hierarchy have been and are the sons of that great *Apostacy*, who did desert the true Faith of Christ taught and written to them; and are turned and keep unto most damnable Heresies that ever were invented. These prove plainly a defection from, and an interruption of the true Tradition from Christ. 2 Thes. 2. 4.

2. The Consequent therefore of *Traditions defectiveness* cannot be denied; neither dareth the man here expresly to deny it. Only so farre as his skill serveth him, he labours notwithstanding to assert his conclusion, the Indefectiveness of his Tradition. His props are broken Reeds, which fall with their building by a touch.

1. *Contingency* is urged, Such a thing may be in working upon a whole *ſpecies* or *kind*; an yet the *general Indeficiency* abide. We can tell him, there is not only a *Contingency*, but a *neceſſity* laid by heaven; that ſuch *Hereſies muſt be*, *that they who are approved may be made manifeſt*. Yet again if it be but a *Contingent* detect of *Tradition*, it is enough to deſtroy the *Indefectibility*.

1 Cor. 11. 19.

2. It is a moſt groſs untruth, *That the Cauſes propagating faith to Poſterity, are as Efficacious, as thoſe which are laid to propagate mankind; unworthy of a man of Reaſon to utter.* For, the Cauſes of Mans propagation are *natural* and laid under providence *neceſſarily producing* the ſame kind; but the cauſes of Faiths conveiance and preſervation among men, ſuch as the Author mentions, Fore-fathers teaching, Church Inſpection *&c.* are *voluntary*, depending on mans will; and therefore weak and uncertain to produce the effect intended. Are theſe equal then in force of propagation? Beſides the reaſon added is inſipid; Becauſe *Faith continueth no longer than Mankind its only Subject.* Suppoſe this true: Is therefore Faiths Propagation as extenſive and ſure as Mankinds? Or is Faith con-natural to Mankind? Or becauſe Faith is competent only to Man, is it proper to all men? What means the man by ſuch wild kind of reaſonings?

As

As well might he ſay; Mankind is born learned.

3. It is as frothy a ſuggeſtion, he maketh in the next place, That *theſe Cauſes of Faiths propagation before explicated, are effectively powerful to make multitudes daily debar themſelves of thoſe pleaſures, which are the Cauſes of Mankinds propagation.* The Inference hence muſt be, that Faiths propagation is more ample and ſure, becauſe it hinders the propagation of men O monſtrous fruit of Popiſh Tradition. What can he mean, but that his Traditionary faith hindreth men from marrying, and ſo from propagating their kind; that their Faith may have the better increaſe? Which is one expreſs character of *Antichriſtian Apoſtaſie* to forbid men to marry. And the Author here confeſſeth that his Traditionary faith puts a bar unto ſuch marriage pleaſures allowed and ordained of God for propagation of *Mankind*, and ſo his *Church* among them. Unleſs he mean adulterous and unlawful pleaſures; which he knows that his Traditionary Faith could never bar out of their Monaſteries and Nunneries: and that it hath allowed common ſtews for the relief of thoſe *Monaſtical Perſons*, to whom they have interdicted Marriage, as an unholy thing. Their own Children of *Rome* have written, and teſtified theſe things to their faces. Why then ſhould not the *Diſcour-*

ſer bluſh to render ſuch a reaſon of Faiths more certain increaſe to a Poſterity of Beleevers, then the Propagation of all Mankind? If he will not, we ſhall caſt a vail over him and paſs away.

4. As to his laſt proof from *Hiſtory*, ſince the firſt planting of Chriſtianity, That by experience we ſhall find more particular failing in propagating their *Kind* than their *Faith*.

1. We challenge him to produce ſuch an *Hiſtory*, or elſe he is a Fabler.

2. We charge him with this Iſſue, which muſt follow from his Hiſtory alledged, *That there have been more Beleevers born than men.* For if Faith have failed leſs in its propagation, than men in propagating their kind; there muſt needs be more *Faith* than *Manhood* in the world, *Riſum teneatis Amici?* If the Diſcourſer be a reaſonable man, and learned as he ſeemeth to profeſs himſelf, let him clear himſelf from this abſurd Conſequence of his Hiſtorical proof: Or if not, let him ingeniouſly ſay he was miſtaken: but if he will not, all men may ſee that a ſpirit of perverſeneſs doth miſguide him. So much to his anſwer of the Objection.

2. All that follows in *Sſ.* 2, 3, & 4. The Diſcourſer himſelf ſtileth very truly a *Parergon*, that is, *a Gloſſe beſides the Text*, or a *needleſs digreſſion*, beſide the matter in hand

hand, or a *troubleſome Parentheſis*, juſtly to be expunged; Yet not to leap over all at once (as juſtly it may be ſlighted) we ſhall make ſome ſteps over it, in a way of Animadverſion. In the ſecond and third he ſheweth the Riſe and growth of Hereſie; In the fourth the ſad conſequents of the ſame.

We ſhall not repeat all he ſaith, but animadvert upon his paſſages *S.* 2.

1. He ſuppoſing Hereſie an Evil incident in the viſible Church, and ſeducing from it, we add, It muſt then be the true Primitive Church ſettled by the Apoſtles, not the Apoſtate *Church of Rome*, (which the Author intends) For it can be no hereſie to ſeparate from Hereticks as being ſuch; among which none are greater than Papiſts ſworn to their *Trent-Doctrine*. And that he muſt mean this Church, and not the other, every Reader may perceive from his own ſuggeſtion: *That theſe Deſerters lay hold on ſome accidental miſcarriages, as fooliſh Opinions or ill lives of ſome in the Church, which they aggravate beyond all reaſon to juſtifie their Rebellion.* Were there ſuch fooliſh opinions in the Church Apoſtolical? Or ſuch ill lives among them to give occaſion unto ſuch, who pretended better, to forſake them? *Idolatrous Balaamits* indeed, and Laſcivious *Nicolaitans*, left them, becauſe their doctrine was truly ſpiritual, and

and their lives too ſtrict, and holy for them. If the *Diſcourſer* therefore characterize Hereticks by this, in forſaking a Church for fooliſh doctrins, and looſe lives; It will prove at laſt better to be ſuch an Heretick, than a member of ſuch a Church, when he ſaith, that there are but ſome ſo bad; and that their failings are aggravated beyond all reaſon: Let him know that all his Church are alike guilty in matter of Doctrine, if not in beaſtlineſs of life; and that falſe Doctrine and wicked life cannot be aggravated beyond reaſon or meaſure upon ſuch as pretend to be of the Church of Chriſt. It is no Rebellion to relinquiſh *Rome*, for wicked opinions and ſinful lives; nor an unreaſonable crime to aggravate their abominations, which may make the Heavens bluſh to behold, and be aſtoniſhed, that they ſhould be acted under the name of Chriſt.

2. As to his method of inventing new Tenets, and ſuting them by plauſibleneſs and licentiouſneſs with the paſſionate humors of divers; and ſo drawing into a Faction, get the ſtate on their ſides; and ſo having indemnity and hopes of rewards, their Corrupt te low Revolters bandy with them againſt the former Church, and thus a Body is made *&c.* Our return is, 1. That this is the faireſt deſcription of the Method taken by *Rome* Papal in their Apoſt ſie

Apoſtaſie from Chriſts Doctrine delivered by the Apoſtles in word and writing, none could give a more lively diſcovery of it from Hiſtory.

2 That this they did by their *Oral-Tradition* contradicting the Scripture of Truth.

3. The known *newneſs* of which to the firſt ſettled Doctrine of Chriſt, is ſo evident, that to deny it, were (as the *Diſcourſer* phraſeth it) *to tell an open lye to no imaginable purpoſe.*

3. As to his Inferences fetcht from the premiſes.

1. We ſee plainly that it is the *Romiſh Society*, which he covers under the name of the *Church*, concerning which we profeſſedly aſſert, that they have erred from the Faith of Chriſt; and that by their *Tradition*. And this is proved in the ſight of the Chriſtian World, above their contradiction.

2. The Proteſtants who maintain the former, ſeek out no new *Rule* but the firſt and oldeſt, even the Scripture of God as ſenced by himſelf.

3. They deteſt private Inſpirations inconſiſtent with the word of God; they ſcorn quirks of wit to blunder any; their learning is not *wordiſh* nor *curiouſly Critical*: but ſuch whereby their moſt learned Jeſuits have been proved fooliſh Sophiſters, in defending their cauſe againſt the

the Scriptures of God; even the wisedome of God in his Mystery.

4. They scorn to hook in *Romish Catholicks*, but tell them plainly that their Infallible and evident way of Tradition is a Lie; neither do they cry victory, but where Gods word (which he cannot deny) prevaileth and puts them to silence.

5. The Protestants are not ambitious of any name, given or assumed by men; They content themselves with that *Primitive Name of Christs Disciples*, divinely imposed, which is *Christians*, no new Name. As for the name of *Catholick* they offer to prove. If the reason of it be the holding of the Catholick Faith, delivered by the Apostles, it is most properly theirs; as our own *Country men* have made good, and that famous *Chamier* stileth the Protestants commonly by that name in opposition to Papists. His Enumeration of Titles afterwards is ridiculous and scandalous: Who knoweth not that the Papists named them *Lutherans and Zuinglians* in scorn, who entertained the Doctrine of Christ preached by them? Did *Luther* or *Zuinglius* baptize Sects into their own names, any more then the Apostle *Paul*? The Discourser may be ashamed of such Foolish reflexions. Let *Tritheits and Sacramentarians* injoy the Title of their Tenets, if they deserve them.

Act. 11. 26.

The

The Protestants will maintain their name (however they glory in none, but the name of Christ Jesus put upon them, from their Profession of Christs Truth against Romish and Antichristian Falshood; The *Combination* they leave to those Popish vassals, that are conspired against the Scripture-Truth.

Lastly, as to the poor *Quakers and Dippers*, the man knoweth or may know, that his Popish Emissaries have abused them, taught them *Quaking and Dipping*; and then abuse them. It is known that the Jesuitical Mountebanks have transformed themselves into all sorts of *Sectaries*, that have been active in these latter times; and that they have more prevailed under a *Form of Godliness* with poor simple souls to invalidate the Authority of Scriptures, and to deny Justfication of sinners by the Righteousness of Christ without them, by a pretended Christ within them, than ever they have done, since their Trent-Doctrine was established. They have more cause therefore to incourage these so far Proselytes of theirs, than thus to jeer them. It is but a just Diversion to put him upon the reconciling of all the names of the several orders in his own Romish Catholick Profession; there he will find work enough, if he passes by the names of other Sectaries.

2. All

2. All in §. 3. is Calumny and ſlander caſt upon the Proteſtants; which they blow off eaſily and truly. 1. They throw not by that *Scripture Rule* (which they profeſſe) to take up Tradition without it; They maintain not Scriptures Letter their Rule. 2. They never denied Oral-Tradition of that Truth of Chriſt, which is written. 3. They leave not men to interpret Scripture to their fancies, but maintain the ſufficiency of Scripture to open it ſelf to rational underſtanders of it; all the Contradictions then ſuggeſted they deteſt. 4. It is a ſin rightly charged upon *Romiſh* Powers, to puniſh any for deſerting their Traditionary Rule of Falſhood, which they recommend. And a greater ſin it is for Proteſtants to puniſh thoſe under them for following the Scriptures too cloſe, being the *Rule* which themſelves recommended and applauded, as the whole and ſole Baſis of their Reformation; for they muſt ſin not only againſt the Truth, but the Light it ſelf. And that a Papiſt ſhould charge this upon Proteſtant Church-Powers before the Sun, if he can prove, it weel ſay,

——*Pudet hæc opprobria nobis.*
Et dici potuiſſe. & non potuiſſe refelli.

We ſhall yet ſay, no Principle of Proteſtantiſm alloweth this. Let the guilty ſuffer, let the innocent go free. This makes not Tradition any whit the better, neither

neither renders the *Scripture-Rule* any whit the worse.

3. In the fourth Sect. He draweth ſad conſequences from his premiſes, which we ſhall only ſhake off from our *Scripture*-Rule; whence his uſe will be as uſeleſs, as his Parergon.

1. Proteſtant Chriſtians learn better from the *Scriptures*, than to wreak their malice againſt their Perſecuters; or by numbers to involve nations in war and blood. The *Scripture Rule* teacheth them to pray for thoſe that perſecute them, and bleſs them that curſe them. This is the natural Fruit of *Scripture* Grace; and made good by multitudes of ſuffering Chriſtians: who will heartily ſay *Amen* to that Petition, *God of his mercy avert ſuch war and blood from our diſtracted Nation.* This is a malicious inſinuation againſt the *Scripture-Rule:* They who own it, abhorr diſobeying of a certain and known legall Authority, and of making Rebellion, and an unimpowred ſword the Defence of Truth.

2. His next inſinuation hereupon is to prudent Conſiderers, how much it conduceth to State-unity and peace, that the Principle of conveying Faith, be built upon *Senſible Evidence*, acknowledgable by all Mankind, when rightly underſtood. This in plain Terms is *Romiſh Tradition.* And hereupon let us a little *quere.*

1. How

1: How many of Mankind, can or do underſtand this?

2. Can they who know it, upon due comparing it with the primitive Doctrine of Chriſt, underſtand it otherwiſe than to be a Lie?

3. Is the way of conveying down Faith by lies conducible to State-Unity, and Peace?

4. Why hath not this Tradition made peace among thoſe Popiſh Nations of *Germany*, *Spain*, *France*, and *Portugal*. &c. Who are enſlaved to it? Nay hath not this Jeſuitical-Traditionary Doctrine been the only cauſe of blood and Maſſacres in *France*, &c? The *Scripture Rule* will adviſe Chriſtian Rulers and States better for keeping themſelves in a proſperous Unity and Peace: *Kiſs the Son, leſt he be angry*, &c. Whatever worldly Politicians ſay; Submiſſion of Thrones and Powers to the Law of the Prince of Peace in the ſimplicity of the Goſpel, is the only way to have ſwords beaten into Plowſhares, and Spears into pruning hooks; and to ſettle Peace in all Nations. This digreſſion hath been forced by the *Diſcourſers Parergon*; leaving his Demonſtration: whereunto the trouble of it is due.

Pſal. 2, 12.

3. In Sect. 5. To make amends, he telleth us, The uſefulneſs of this *Parergon*, ſerves to elucidate as it were practically and experimentally, the certainty of Tradition, &c.

We

We shall close up this Discourse with him by some counter-positions.

1. With the best eies we have, we can perceive no Elucidation by all that he hath said of the Certainty of his Romish Tradition; nor any eies but his own, or such as look with his spectacles, can perceive any such thing: But in truth he darkens knowledge by many vain words, as any careful, judicious and impartial Reader will see.

2. The number of the actual Deserters of the way of natural Tradition we judge was none; Seeing constantly Fathers to children, did still convey down their language: but the Revolters from Apostolical Tradition were numerous, as the very Scriptures and the next following Centuries do evidence. As to the Deserters of Romish Apostatical Tradition, (for this the Discourser must mean, and he can go no higher) if they were but few (as he observeth) then was fulfilled that Prophesie, That all that dwell upon the Earth should worship that Romish Beast, and receive his mark, whose names were not written in the Lambs book of Life. Let him make the best of it. Rev. 13.8

3. Protestant Revolters from *Rome*, did maintain Christs Tradition before, though not Popish; neither gave they their Interpretations of Scripture, as *Tradition misplaced* The Disputer is mistaken.

4. The

4. The unsavory urging of the means to lessen *Mankinds Propagation* beneath that of *Faith*, and greatning the means of *Faiths Issue* beyond that of *Mankind*, must nauseate a Rational stomack that hath any savour of Christianity in it: As

1. The numerous contingencies hindring the propagation of mans nature, more than of Faith.

2. The daily decay of men, by natural and accidental deaths, not incident to Faith.

3. The whole Nations into which Tradition hath and doth propagate it self &c. without one Deserter of it.

4. The many External Instruments for propagating Faith, when single Progenitors only continue their kind. From all, which he concludes the causes of propagating a *Body of Traditionary Christians*, are lesse needing any particular Providence, than the keeping on Foot a *Body of men*. Wherefore they be all roving Arguments in his account, that are against the *Perpetuation of his Tradition*, and as well may they be against the perpetuating *Mankind*; And his answer is ready for them, *only that they do so.*

O the blindness and efficacious delusion which God hath sent upon these seducing *Papists*, while they contend against his *Scripture Truth*! Can an understanding Christian beleeve, that there are more

Contingencies

Contingencies, or accidents hindring mens propagation than *Faiths*. If thousands of accidental deaths leſſen the number of men, Are there not millions of ſins in every man which are ſo many ſpiritual deaths deſtroying faith? What means the *Man* by ſuch wild expreſſions? Doth not alſo the Faith of men dye with them, as to their being in the world? And beſides them, Are there not millions of men in the world ſurviving, who have no Faith when multitudes of Beleevers dye? Do only ſingle Progenitors or lawful Fathers beget Children among the Papiſts? Are there not as many Adulterous Parents with them as Emiſſaries who compaſs ſea and land to make Romiſh Proſelytes? Is Popiſh Faith ſo fruitful by their Tradition? So it may be among Whores: But in Chriſts own obſervation, it is otherwiſe, as to the off-ſpring of true Faith; So his queſtion imports, when the Son of Man commeth, *ſhall he find Faith in the Earth*? Luk 18.8. He doubts not to find men enough; but he foreſeeth few *Beleevers*. What the *Body of Traditionary Chriſtians means*, we may know to be a moſt numerous ſeed of Papiſts, to whom he appropriates that Title: And yet that there ſhould be ſuch a vaſt number of ſuch corrupt Beleevers, exceeding all other mankind, is moſt incredible; unleſs the *Pope* hath begotten all the earth to him; and then his *Men* and his *Beleevers*

vers are but equal; In short, it is little less then *Blasphemy* to say, that *Faith* needs less of particular *Providence* to produce it than *Man*, seeing the most special Providence giveth it, and the arm of God worketh it in special chosen Subjects, to whom it is designed. But what will not a spirit of delusion utter against the Almighty? In fine this sottish discourse, was sufficiently uncovered, as to its folly. *S.* 1. Neither would we have said any more here, but as provoked with his unsavory reiterations of the same: We shall conclude, here is no Demonstration of Romish Traditions Indefectiveness made good. If yet the Discourser should boldly say, that he hath done it; It will be answer enough in his own kind to tell him, *That he saies so.* Enough of this: We shall inquire further into his second Demonstration.

THE

THE
Eighth Discourse
EXAMINED.

HErein he pretends a Demonstration of the *Uninterruptedness of his Tradition, à Posteriori*, or from the Effect: Wherein.

2. He sheweth his scope to shew the certainty of Faiths conveiance guarded, and on all sides Evident. *S.* 1.

2. He pretendeth the needlesness of this labor as to Protestants, *S.* 2.

3, He layeth down the Effect which is the *Medium* of his Demonstration, *S.* 3.

4. He offers the proof of it, *Sf.* 4, 5.

5. He advanceth his conclusion, *S.* 6. We shall reply orderly.

1. To his aim or mark set up, we only say, he will do his cause right, and play the man, if he hit it: but we doubt his skill.

2. If his indeavour were *needless* upon the *Protestants Account*, he might well have spared it: but he thought it not so, whatever he saith; therefore he pursueth

his work. But why was it needleſs as to them? Have they granted his Concluſion? He dareth not ſay ſo. Yet he examines them upon ſome Interrogatories, to which he deſireth them to anſwer candidly, and ſo they will.

1. To his firſt. Quære they reply. That the Doctrine *of the Trinity, Incarnation, and all Points of ſound Faith* delivered in the *Scriptures*, were held in all Ages ſince Chriſt, by Gods Church: Yet they have ſome limitations, and Exceptions to propound unto him.

1. That theſe Doctrines were held then in the true and genuine ſtate of them; not with corrupt gloſſes concealed under theſe terms, which were various.

2. That in the true and ſound ſenſe of the *Trinity* and *Incarnation* there is not a full agreement between *Proteſtants and Papiſts*. For they differ about the notions of *word* and *Image* uſed about the Trinity: and how vaſtly they diſagree about the *words* being made *Fleſh*, and the ends of the incarnation of the Son of God; the Controverſies about that *Monſter of Tranſubſtantiation* making Chriſts fleſh of bread, and about the *Mediator* in his perſon, *natures*, *&c.* maintained to this day between them, do ſufficiently declare.

3. Although Proteſtants acknowledge theſe doctrines in truth to be held in the Church of God, yet they agree not that

upon

upon this account alone, it was truly called *Gods Church*; for in word many professed these, and yet held things destructive to them; as among the *Trent Anathemas* may appear, that *Rome* doth at this day. They judge therefore that the Title of Gods Church, is truly given unto that Body alone, which resigneth it self up unto Christ as their Head: to be ruled by him in doctrine, worship, and discipline, according to his Evangelical Law written by the Prophets and Apostles. Herein the Discourser will hardly acknowledge an agreement with them.

2. To his second quære they say, that these points of Faith were taught by Fathers to Children, and by the former Age to the latter: But withall they say, That all true Teachers, Fathers and others, taught them these things from the Scriptures, and durst not imbue them with any Doctrine that was not written: So that *Oral* did but convey the *Scriptural* Tradition: which use of it Protestants did alwaies grant: And what advantage hath the man by this Concession?

3. To his third quære, they demur a little, before they expressly answer.

1. They stick upon the notion of *Virtue of* Tradition-oral; and they conceive, there is both a *natural* force of speech to make known things, and an *assistent power* or *virtue* given it by Gods ordinance,

as it is appointed a means to give down the true knowledge of Christs doctrine. Again they stop upon those terms, *Others as well as these*; which they think he should mean of *other points* of saving Faith, as those of the *Trinity and Incarnation*: but they suspect him to intend other points of *Romish* Faith, which he should have exprest. Upon these Terms debated, now they answer.

1. That they are affirmative in this, That by the *natural virtue of speech natural matters of Truth* are given down to Posterity.

2, They assert that by *divine virtue* assisting, this *Oral-Tradition* conveyeth down the saving knowledge of Christ from Father to Children, in all points of Truth revealed in the Scripture unto Salvation.

3. They charge deceit upon this *Discourser* in concealing his *other points*, to be brought down by virtue of his Tradition. And question him, why he did not name his other points of Popish Faith, *debasing Scriptures*, *settling their Popes Supremacy*, their lye *of Transubstantiation*, their *Fable of Purgatory*, *&c.* Which he insinuates, must uninterruptedly proceed from Christ, and his Apostles; as the Doctrine of the *Trinity and Incarnation*.

4. They are positively negative (however he may not suspect them) That the divine

divine vertue assisted not the Tradition of any of these Popish Articles, or the like, imported under those *other*: And do affirm that by the power of Satan that first lyer and deceiver, all those untruths issuing from the mistery of iniquity were powerfully given down to Papists in Oral-Tradition contrary to Gods written word: It being under Gods permissive, and overruling Providence as apt to convey down Falshood and lyes to Posterity, as any Truth of God.

4. As to his 4th *Quere* about Connection between Cause and Effect.

1. They yeeld under the Providence of God constituting a necessary connection between subordinate natural causes, and their formal effects; as between the Sun and light.

2. In voluntary Causes and effects, as Tradition and Faith, where God hath not settled a necessary connection, they deny the constant issue of such Effects from such Causes.

3. They yeeld also where the Truth of Christ *was ever delivered, it was ever received*: that is, by them to whom it was delivered effectually by the spirit of God in such Tradition.

4. They deny that Papists can argue from any such Effect, to such a Cause for any point that is in Controversie between them and Protestants; For all meerly Po-

piſh Points cannot be aſſerted, as *ever delivered* from Chriſt unto this day; therefore can they not be *ſo received*. Jeſuitical impudency may be aſhamed to ſay it. Whereupon the Diſcourſer, adds as a ſubterfuge, (*In caſe it be a Point we held ever delivered*) Hath he been contending all along for the indefectibility of Traditionary Romiſh Faith from Chriſt, as *ever delivered, and as ever received from Chriſt to this day*? And now come to ſhuffle in this job, *In caſe it were by them held ſo ever delivered*? Is it their holding it ever or never delivered, that makes it ſo? What unreaſonable arguing is this? Are there any points of Faith that were not at firſt delivered by Chriſt and ſo ever drawn down from him? Had any Church power to make new points of Faith in ages after? How then ſhould any true point of Faith be otherwiſe held, but as ever delivered from Chriſt. To ſave any more pains they ſay.

1. No points of Faith controverted by Papiſts with Proteſtants, are *ever or uninterruptedly* delivered from Chriſt to them at this day; neither can they be rationally ſo received. They who will be blind muſt be blind. The Sun beam is not clearer then this.

2. From all the Conceſſions of Proteſtants, it appears not needleſs that he ſhould demonſtrate better the *Indefectibility* of his *Tradition*. If not, he hath proved

ved nothing; and so our dispute may be well put to an end. As to his suspicion, it is malitious folly: For Protestants know no *chance*, nor *Fortune*, nor *contingency* in Gods ordering means to bring down the true Faith of Christ unto the worlds end: but an *infinite Wise and unchangeable Providence*; which hath ordained true and faithful Tradition both Scriptural and oral to preserve the saving knowledge of Christ unto his chosen in the world: which also suffereth and ordereth *lying Tradition to fascinate* those unto perdition, who will not receive the love of the Truth, that they might be saved. But he pursueth his design and method at first intended, and we shall closely follow him, to try his attainments therein.

3. He proceeds to his Demonstration from the Effect, about which he laieth down. 1. His *Medium* or *Ground* of it. *S.* 3.—— 2. His Proof of this, *S.* 4. 5.—3. His Conclusion. *S.* 6. The sum of all which Sections, to make the work shorter and easier to be apprehended, may be reduced to this form of Argument in three propositions.

That which is the present perswasion of Traditionary Christians, or, Romish Catholicks, that their faith hath descended from Christ and his Apostles uninterruptedly by Oral-Tradition, is undoubtedly a Truth. But

It is the present perswasion of Romish Catholicks, &c. Ergo, *This uninterrupted descent of*

their

their Faith from Christ by Oral Tradition is undoubtedly a Truth.

1. In this Syllogism we have at once a view of all his strength in this second Demonstration: And to cut the sinews of it, we deny the *Proposition* as most ridiculously false: Had he offered it only to his blind Papists it might have past for current with them, as other notorious falshoods do, given them by Tradition: But to argue thus with Protestants or any other reasonable men, not of his Religion, is to expose himself to hissing. For who of them will value the present perswasion of Romish Catholicks about the uninterruptedness of their Tradition as an undoubted Truth? and so it must be, if it be a certain *Medium* to infer a true conclusion. The Protestants therefore deny his Proposition, whereof he labours not to make the least proof at all, but beggs it as a ground not to be questioned. We dare not trust Popish perswasions; therefore we grant it not. And untill he prove it, his Demonstration is void, and our work is at stand.

2. His endeavour is to prove his Assumption in S. 4. 5. and that by two *Principles* (as he calleth them) which when he hath done is but to little purpose; for we believe that Romish Catholicks have such a present perswasion without proof. And the impossibility of the being of this

perswasion

perſwaſion in them, we grant, without the exiſtence of their pretended *indefici-ency of Romiſh Tradition*: But impoſſible it would have been that ſuch a perſwaſion ſhould be, had the *even-indifficiency* of Chriſts Doctrine alone continued with them. Yet we will glance at his *Principles*, which he thus laieth down.

1. *That Age which holds her Faith delivered thus from the Apoſtles, neither can it ſelf have changed any thing in it, nor know or doubt, that any Age ſince the Apoſtles had changed or innovated any thing therein.*

2. *No Age could innovate any thing, and withall deliver that very thing to Poſterity, as received from Chriſt by continual Succeſſion.*

Upon theſe he deſcants a little to delude his unwary Reader; but we ſhall a little ſift him.

1. Are theſe indeed *Principles*? Then they muſt be known to men as men, and command their reaſon by ſuch light, as they cannot but unreaſonably deny: Now what man as a meer *Man* regards the Faith of Chriſt either to its being or Traduction? They are no Principles to them.

2. What *Ages* doth this man mean, that cannot change nor innovate Faith, ſo held to be delivered from the Apoſtles? Surely they muſt be ſucceſſive Generations of Papiſts and theſe were alwaies fitteſt to prove their own perſwaſions. So he

he plainly argueth, That the perſwaſion of Romiſh Catholicks about indeficiency of their Tradition muſt be true, becauſe no Age of them could change or innovate that which was delivered of faith unto them. This will do it indeed, if ſuch things paſs for Principles.

3. We do charge it on ſeveral Ages of Papiſts, that however *de jure* they could not do it; yet *de facto* they have both changed and innovated that Faith of Chriſt once delivered by the Apoſtles to the Saints in the written Goſpel, and withall have conveied it unto poſterity, as received from Chriſt by continued Succeſſion. Several Centuries have declared it: And this daies experience teſtifieth to it, that their Teachers do perſwade them, that all their abominations in doctrine and worſhip, which the Lord abhorrs, and the reſt of the Chriſtian world knoweth to be falſe, are indefectively deſcended by Tradition from Chriſt unto them.

4. The pretence of an Impoſſibility that whole Ages ſhould thus deceive and be deceived is frivolous; ſeeing the thing is viſibly done; as it was alſo foretold, that the *world* ſhould go after the *Romiſh Beaſt*, God hath paſt that ſentence upon thoſe earthly minded men, who love not the ſimple ſpiritual Truth of Chriſt. Neither is it rare for ſeared Conſciences to deliver falſhood for Truth againſt their knowledge. And the ſooner they begin thus

to

to corrupt their Off-spring every month ripening to a capacity of such knowledge, it is the more efficacious; To all which Motives are not wanting to ingage unto their faction all they can; For the glory of the world binds them, which the Papal Interest doth so much as it can assure them of: And in fine, To hold contradictions, and tell lies for their advantage, is not are thing for them, who are the the sworn *Vassals* unto *Romish Tradition*, against the *Scriptures* of God: They must contradict themselves, who walk so contrary unto the Lord in faith and practice. From the premises then men may see the ridiculousness of his Principles.

4. Yet he advanceth from these his Conclusions in *S. 6.* Seeing this is the present perswasion of *Romish Catholicks* that their Faith is uninterruptedly descended from Christ to them, and the ages of their Forefathers could not change or innovate it nor deliver it, if innovated, as received from Christ by continual succession; therefore the indefectiveness of their Traditionary Faith from Christ must be true: They hold it descended to them as such, therefore it did descend to them as such. And hence the Demonstrator collects confidently, That no power nor wit of man could make their Faith now held to be so descended, but its having been actually so descended: that is, by the only existence of Traditions indefic ency this present perswasion could be effected

fected in *Romish Catholicks* of their faiths uninterrupted descent from the Apostles: For they hold that the Church, (which is their Romish) never failed in Faith.

Unto all which we reply in short, and leave it to be weighed in an equal ballance.

1. His proposition is denied, Popish perswasion argueth not the indefectiveness of their Tradition.

2. His Principles are vain and begg'd, by which he makes good his Assumption.

His Inference is the same with his *medium*. They hold their Faith descended to them as such, therefore it did descend to them as such.

4. Although the Power and wit of man, could not have made them hold their Faith to be so ever descended to them, unless it had been so actually descended; Yet some Power and wit of the Devils added to it, under the righteous judgment of God, could easily delude them, and make them hold that, which was not true.

5. Their tenaciousness of their Romish Churches never failing in the Faith of Christ, is the grand delusion by which the old Serpent hath beguiled them into their obstinate and wilful erring by its Tradition. Her Apostasie is so notorious that if the Scripture be the word of God,

she

ſhe cannot be the Church of Chriſt.

6. We conclude from all, that the Diſcourſer's Demonſtration is ſappleſs and irrational, concluding nothing as he pretended, which we leave to the judgment of the moſt acute Chriſtian Readers. Blind Papiſts may beleeve him and periſh by him; but ſuch whoſe eies are healed with Chriſts *eye-ſalve*, will eaſily perceive, there is neither Truth nor Reaſon in it. So that we hold ſtill.

1. *Romiſh Oral-Tradition of their Trent-faith is not uninterruptedly deſcended from Chriſt and his Apoſtles.*

2. *Scriptural Tradition of the Goſpel-faith, is indefectively deſcended from Chriſt and his Apoſtles unto us.*

He next proceeds from Demonſtration unto Church-proof of the indefectiveneſs of his Tradition.

THE

THE
Ninth Diſcourſe
EXAMINED.

IN this Diſcourſe the Author endeavours to better his Demonſtration by the ſtrength of the Churches Teſtimony unto his Tradition, wherein occurre unto obſervation.

1. A preface unto his Diſcouſe. *S.* 1.

2. A diſcovery of the Churches Humane Authority. *S.* 2, 3, 4.

3. A narration of her divine Aſſiſtances in teſtifying, *S.* 5, 6, 7. *&c.*

1. In his preface he perſonates an objecter, who ſhould ſay, that by all his former diſcourſes, (they being but Nature) a Heathen by his natural wit may become a good Chriſtian: To which having in his looſe faſhion returned; He tells us it was out of his road, and only that hence he might take his riſe to ſhew how far Chriſtian Tradition is ſtrengthned above the greateſt humane Teſtimony, *&c.*

Not

Not to repeat his many words, we ſhall only note ſomethings in his reply.

1. Seeing he wonders what elſe ſhould be *ſupernaturality*, but *ſupernatural motives* laid before *natural* men, to be conſidered and received by *natural faculties*; we cannot but wonder that ſuch a Maſter in his Church ſhould be ſo ignorant of *Supernaturality*, or a *ſtate of Grace* above *nature*; *Nicodemus* was not ſo dark in this buſineſs. We therefore ſhall ſhortly ſuggeſt.

1. That nothing beneath *Regeneration*, can put a man above *the ſtate of* nature, or make him *ſupernatural* or *ſpiritual*. Joh. 3. 3.

2. The objective *Power of ſupernatural motives*, is not of it ſelf ſufficient to regenerate, being apprehended only by the ſcantling of natural reaſon: but the Almighty *Spirit* of God muſt come upon ſouls to make them be born *Spirit of Spirit*, to effect this. Moral perſwaſion may make almoſt a Chriſtian, as *Agrippa* was, but not a Chriſtian truly and throughout. Joh. 3. 6.

3. No *extraordinary Inſpiration* is expected for each particular man, as to this effect, but the *Ordinary* work of Gods ſpirit by his word, which is ſo far from unraveling the order of Gods beſt Providence in bringing men to ſalvation; that nothing doth more magnifie and confirm

it. And if this be the very Notion of *Fanatickneſs*, let our ſouls be under that Character, to which the *Diſcourſer* muſt come if ever he be ſaved, although now he jeers it.

4. All this is out of his road, (as he ſaith) and indeed it is as many other things, needleſs and inapt unto his preſent buſineſs; but he excuſeth it, that it was but to take his riſe, to ſhew Traditions ſtrength by the humane Authority and divine Aſſiſtances of his Church: He were beſt to beware, leſt (as the Schollar) he mount on the wrong ſide of the horſe, and tumble over. He offers to riſe to the *Aſſiſtances of the Holy Ghoſt*, which he ſaith are built upon *Perfections* of will in the *Faithful*, or on *Virtues*, the effects properly attributed to that Divine Perſon. How? The Aſſiſtances of the Holy Ghoſt built upon mens wills, and its own Effects? He attempts his riſe moſt ſillily, we judge the Effects of the Spirit to be built upon his Perſon, and not this, or its Operation upon them; and man will to be the ſubject of the ſpirits influence, and not the *Baſis* on which it is built. This fore-bodes but a bad expedition; yet we ſhall try what he will do. Although the ſum of all expreſſed here hath been handled heretofore.

2. Before he declareth theſe Aſſiſtances of the Holy Spirit, he adventureth to ſtre[illegible]

first the Churches Humane Authority for testifying, to exceed any other in the world; which he doth by comparing it with the vast number of Turks, Testifiers of Tradition from their Mahomet; in *Sect.* 2, 3, & 4th. This may be shortly presented to one view in this form of Argument. *If the humane force of the Churches Testimony that their Faith descended from Christ unto them by indefective Tradition, farre exceed the Witness of the Turks concerning their Mahomets existence, then its Authority is to be beleeved before theirs,* But

The humane force of the Churches Testimony far exceeds that of the Turks, Therefore, *The Churches Witness is much more to be beleeved,* &c.

The Assumption is expresly laid down, averred by the Author *S.* 2. The Proposition is supplied to form the Argument; The proof of the Assumption is given, *S.* 3. And the Conclusion drawn. *S.* 4.

Now having the whole matter so laid forth before us, we shall both animadvert upon and answer to the whole Argument.

1. When he urgeth the *Churches* Testimony we must understand him speaking of the *Romish* Church, whose Authority he maintains.

2. We note also that he speaks not of this Church, as *Such*, but only of them as *Men*; for here he urgeth only their humane Testimony.

 3. We

3. We wonder at the Mans artificial *Logick* in this, as in other places, to prove circularly *Idem per Idem*: Elſewhere he tells us, that his infallible and Indefective Tradition only can make men fit witneſſes in our preſent controverſie, and here he urgeth Humane Teſtimony to make good indefectiveneſs of his Tradition; So he may make us giddy by rounding us in a circle; but rather then ſo, we will ſtand ſtill, and make a retrograde motion in denying the whole form of his Argument, as fooliſh and ridiculous, not ſhewing him to be the *Man*, which he would ſeem to be: In the next help of his Aſſiſtances, we ſhall ſee him in the ſame fault.

4. To the matter of his Argument, we deny his Aſſumption, That the Humane Authority of his Churches Teſtimony for their Tradition, doth far exceed the Teſtimony of the Turks for their Tradition about the Exiſtence of their Mahomet: For as men they are equally ſinners, and may equally be deceived and deceive. So were Jews and Gentiles. He hath no cauſe therefore to charge Proteſtants as unjuſt to grant that to a body of Turks, which their Paſſion makes them queſtion, and even deny to a Church of Chriſtians; for here he ſpeaks of his Church, not as Chriſtian, but as Humane; only as they are men and not Chriſtians. Moreover the

the Protestants do yield the same to both; That under the just judgement of God the Mahomerans may maintain their Tradition of Mahomets Existence indefectively; but not as descended from God. And no lesse under Gods sentence of justice may the Papists convey the Tradition of their false faith, and idolatrous worship indefectively to their own perdition: but not as descended from Christ. He must therefore prove what he averrs, before that his conclusion will get credit.

5. As to his proof, *S.* 3. It is but an empty sound, to which we return.

1. The credibility of witnesses depends more upon the Quality, than the Quantity of Testifiers, both for matters of Faith and of Fact. One *Elijah* testifying unto Gods Truth, is of more value than the Test of 400 Priests for *Baal*: Numbers therefore will not help him against Truth.

2. Suppose there were vast multitudes, whom the Apostles and Disciples converted in many distant Nations, and there were but an handful of men about *Mecha*, and some other places where Mahomet conquered and planted his Doctrine; the *Turks* will tell him, that the Apostles converted them to be *Christians*, and not to be *Papists*: Neither did any of them give testimony unto *Popish Tradition*: And also that as many of theirs, *saw* their *Mahomets*

existence as of those multitudes converted, who saw Christ in the flesh. The *Discourser* were best to provide an answer for them.

3. It is more than probable, that it was easier for a single company of *Arabians*, and *Syrians* to conspire in a lye for Mahomet, than it was for such a multitude converted, as suckt in Christianity at first, to conspire in a lye for Christ; Nay we say they did not, they durst not, yet this hinders not, but that it was as easie for a multitude of *Popish Fore-fathers as they were men*, to conspire to a lye as much as *Arabians* and *Syrians*, as they are such: We see no difference in this Case.

4. As to his repeated sensations to know Christs Doctrin, we say no more but this, that the *Turks sensations* may be as good and as quick, and as oft repeated about their fabulous doctrins of *Mahomet*, as the *Papists* in reiterating their many fables in their Religion unto their Posterity: And if so, this Argument of sensation (wherewith he nauseates his Readers) is little worth. The *Turks* Testimony for the *Traditions* of his *Mahomet*, may be as firm as the humane Testimony of the *Romish Church*, for their *Popish Tradition* given down to this day. However we will be no Umpires between them. Let them make good their Authority one against

gainſt another; They will joyn iſſue at laſt: For their Traditions will deſtroy them. See the ſtrength of the Humane Authority of his Church for his Tradition.

6. From this exceeding Humane Authority of his Church (having laſht frantick and ſtark mad Opiniaſters, who deny it) he concludeth no greater evidence can be to aſcertain the conveiance of their Faith from Chriſts time unto them. Unto the ſupport whereof he ingageth Scripture and Metaphyſicks, *S.* 4.

We need trouble our ſelves about this; for the premiſes being falſe, the Concluſion muſt fall; yet but to glance.

1. It is no ſtrange thing for Frantick and mad men to think all others like themſelves. Surely if this man were maſter of his reaſon, he muſt needs ſee the weakneſs of his Argument, and unreaſonableneſs of his concluſion; and not caſt firebrands at his opponents; and ſay they are mad. Himſelf will prove the Opiniaſter.

2. Is there no greater Evidence of their indefective Tradition than the Humane Authority of their Church? Why then doth he add the Aſſiſtances of the Holy Ghoſt as greater. So he ſeems to advance his reaſoning from that as the leſs and lower unto thoſe helps as better and higher.

3. What his *Metaphyſicks* do demonſtrate of the perfect method and waies of

eſſential Wiſdome, in laying this indefective Tradition, as ſuch a means (unto mans ſalvation, that all Gods other preſervation of natural things in their kinds, ſcarce deſerves the name of a Providence in compariſon of that; We muſt deſire him to ſhew us, before we can ſee it. Our *Metaphyſicks* reach not that Miſtery of Salvation. But perhaps he is *Hyper-Hyperphyſical.*

4 How he brings in Scripture by Head and ſhoulders, to help the humane Authority of his Churches Teſtimony for the indefectiveneſs of his Tradition, it is ſtrange to us; And how he ingageth the Lord Jeſus, *Joh.* 3, 16. *Matth.* 6. 26. To advance his Tradition together with Gods ſpirit in the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 9. 9. and in *David* that holy Meditator on Gods Law. *Pſ.* 93. 5. Where his vulgar Tranſlation corrupts the Text too, and in ſtead of *Thy Teſtimonies O Lord are very ſure*, do render it, *Thy Teſtimonies are made too much credible.* It may aſtoniſh ſober and underſtanding Readers: For what hath Gods love *in giving his only begotten Son to love ſinners*, or, *his Care over his Children, more than over Fowls and Oxen*, to do with Romiſh Tradition, which is a Lye, and contradicts Scripture-Truth? The Lord abhorrs it. And did *David* ever think that the Teſtimonies of God, were Popiſh Traditions? Or, did he pro-

pheſie

pheſie of them? Never did man more groſly abuſe, and miſapply Scripture than this. If this be his *Church-Traditional-Interpretation*; Reaſon muſt loath it. But the beſt is, he giveth his quotations in *Latin*, that the vulgar ſhould not underſtand them. Here we have the cloſe of his Churches humane Authority, teſtifying to his Tradition. Let this piece of *Latin* anſwer his, *Traditiones & ineptiæ Pontificiæ incredibiles factæ ſunt nimis.*

3. He proceeds to ſhew thoſe Aſſiſtances of the Holy Spirit ſuperadded to nature, given to his Church, which he leavs to be ſcanned by the leaſurely thoughts of Attentive conſiderers, *S* 5.

We wiſh all the leaſure and attentiveneſs unto the Intelligent conſiderers of him; the more they be, they will caſt him in this point of his Aſſiſtances, which we leave to Trial. But in the interim he is guilty of the crime again of proving *Idem per Idem.* Muſt his Tradition teſtifie to thoſe Aſſiſtances to make them ſuch, or elſe they are falſe? And then muſt theſe Aſſiſtances teſtifie to the truth and perpetuity of his Tradition? If this be good Logick; The Diſcourſer will carry all before him: But men will laugh at him for ſuch reaſoning; much more may underſtanding Chriſtians have him in Deriſion. And indeed this is enough to anſwer to the end of this Diſcourſe: But leaſt he

clamor

clamour, that we do not hear him out; we shall consider what follows.

1. In general, *S. 6.* He asserts, the Effect wrought by these assistances, in his witnesses, to be *veracity*; beyond all others, who have not the same: Now to leave out his bombast stuffing of Phantasms, *&c.* I shall cast his Assertion by adding a Proposition to it into this form of Argument.

If Popish Christians by grace are far more fixt to Veracity, than others not imbued with those Heavenly Tenets (who yet naturally speak Truth, if design hinder not; yea even Fools and Drunkards) *then a multitude of them incomparably exceeds in point of testifying the same number of others, unfortified by Christs Doctrine.* But

Popish Christians are far more fixt to veracity by Grace than others, &c. Ergo, *These Popish Christians must exceed in point of testifying unto their Tradition.* This is the general sum.

There is no wrong done to him by forming his discourse thus. It is true *Popish* here is added to *Christians*; for such only he can intend, seeing he denieth such Assistances to any Christians out of his Church: and yet he deludes his *Readers* under the general notions of Christians, as if his witnesses were all professed Christians. This by the way

To the Argument, 1. Seeing the Proposition is Hypothetical, including many particulars

particulars, though we may grant it in the whole; yet several things supposed by him, and included in it, are false; As

1. *That it is natural for every man to speak Truth, if design hinder not.* True it is, man was created *Truth* in Gods Image, and so did necessarily speak truth: But after the Father of lyes had deceived him, and he was fallen from the Image of God, Every man became a lye; and naturally speaks not Truth but falshood, as their Father doth; and that from the womb without design.

2. As to his instance in Fools and Drunkards speaking Truth without artifice. Let his Popish witnesses be like them or go beyond them, he gains little by it; for those witless Creatures speak no truth of God at all, with which we have to do. And what Truth they do bewray, it is out of weakness or wickedness; and let the Authority then of such advance *the veracity of Popish Testifiers*, so much as may be, (for with those he doth compare them.) And indeed they will prove spiritual Fools, and Drunkards all. Whence may be judged easily, what truth they will testifie for Christ. In a word if *Design* may hinder men from speaking truth, none are more to be suspected than Popish witnesses, whose Religion hath been carried on from the first Defection to this

day

day upon *Papal Designs*, most inconsistent with the Faith of the Gospel.

2. But letting go the Proposition, we deny his Assumption, *Popish Christians are not far more fixt to Veracity by their Tenets*, or *pretended Grace*, *than other men not imbued with them*; for they may be imbued with better. Were there nothing but their own *Trent Testimony*-work opened about this, a clearer Demonstration cannot be given to prove the Averseness of *Popish witnesses* to *Veracity*, as to declaring Christs pure Doctrine and the way of his Salvation. This therefore must be proved by the *Discourser*, or else his witness is not worth a straw.

2. In special he laboureth to prove this Veracity of his *Testifiers*, by his formentioned assistances of the Holy Ghost, whereof he giveth an account in all the sequel of this discourse; numbring many.

1. In *S.* 7. The first Assistance to Veracity in his Witnesses (as he saith) is the cure of Original Corruption in them by Grace, so that they incline not to the undue love of Creatures, nor the injuring of Gods ten Commandements; But it implants in their hearts an *over-powring Love of Supreme spiritual Goods*, which leaveth their natural disposition to Truth, free to do its Effect, and renders needless, that crafty way of design, *&c.*

1. Here

1. Here we must note, that this is but *Actum agere*, to say over the same thing again; for this he had ascribed unto his Traditionary Christians before. Needless therefore is it so to repeat it: there is enough there answered to it.

2. Though we grant the power of Grace sufficient to take off hearts from the love of creatures, and to fix hearts upon the love of spiritual goods; Yet we deny this Effect wrought upon Popish Witnesses.

3. It is apparent, that they have done the greatest injury to known rational Orders, even the Ten Commandements, laid for the subsistence of the Universal well-being of Mankind; that they have excluded the second Command forbidding their Image worship, and turned the whole Law from the Spirituality of it to become meerly literal and external, as the Pharisees did by their carnal glosses.

4. As to design, it hath been said and we say it again, The whole *Popish Religion* since the *Roman Empire*, was changed from *Temporal to Spiritual*, hath been carried on meerly upon the *Papal Design*. Histories proclaim it against all Contradiction, that the Pope by his *Religious Emissaries* hath enhanced Kingdoms, and brought the powers of the Earth under to promote his worldly designs; Hereupon their prosperity became one of the great Characters

racters of the True Church: The Myſtery of Jeſuitiſm hath revealed much of this. Theſe witneſſes then are more to be ſuſpected than other men: Neither are their Natures by all they hold, ſet free unto *Veracity*. This Aſſiſtance then is nothing, the Holy Ghoſt will not own it. Moreover, were this a fit place to ingage upon a corrupt paſſage here uſed, it ſhould be made appear, that Grace doth not only leave mans natural diſpoſition free to veracity, but makes a reall change in mans nature from a *Lye* into *Truth*. Let it paſs here.

2. The next ſupernatural Aſſiſtance unto the *Veracity of his Teſtifiers*, is in *S.* 8. by him made to be *ſupernatural Motives of Eternal goods and harms*, ſubjected to mens hopes and fears, much more powerful than *natural* to oblige unto *Veracity* in natural matters, which the ſufferings of the Martyrs in all ages declare; therefore his witneſſes having ſuch motives, muſt needs ſpeak truth.

1. That this is a ſupernatural Aſſiſtance objectively and externally to ſome, who may have an impreſſion of it from Gods ſpirit, may be granted.

2. But why doth the *Diſcourſer* weary us with his *Battiſms*, to tumble over the ſame things ſo often? The force of this hath been repulſt before.

3. We

3. We deny that these motives have prevailed with his Popish witnesses to speak Truth for Christ: For their Trent-Canons injoyn many lies and fables instead of Gospel-Truth: Whatever force therefore those motives may have upon such, who duely receive them, to perswade them unto veracity, they have had none upon those Popish Testees; natural Tests concerning matters of Fact are much more true. The inward work of the spirit is that only which makes men to speak truth for God: Neither *Heaven* nor *Hell* will perswade without this.

3. In *S.* 9. He giveth us to consider another supernatural Assistance unto his Testifiers for Tradition, which is the ingaging of them unto veracity by the Sacraments of the Church, held to have been instituted by Christ himself. Now if oaths and other Ceremonies, do keep natural men to their Trust which are made by them; how much more must the Sacraments of Christ, both general to all Christians, and special to Officers, oblige all not to prevaricate from the Faith held, nor belye their Fore-fathers, nor betray their Deposition?

1. We have had this help also to Tradition once before pressed, whereunto answer enough was made. Yet we are put to it once again.

2. These Sacraments which are Christs, are indeed supernatural external means, ingaging

ingag'ng men to be Truth, ſpeak Truth, and do Truth as unto God; but theſe may be uſed (as ſome Papiſts themſelves confeſs) without the Aſſiſtance or Cooperation of the Holy Ghoſt. And in ſuch caſe they do indeed *de jure* oblige men to ſpeak truth, but not *de facto*; for many uſe falſhood, who do receive them.

3. The ſupernatural virtue of theſe alſo, is peculiar only to thoſe two Sacraments, which the Lord himſelf inſtituted, *viz. Baptiſme and the Lords ſupper*; (whatever Papiſts do hold otherwiſe) For he had no more; they have made the reſt; which being of humane Inſtitution, are no Aſſiſtances of the Ghoſt.

5. The Corruption which they have made in Chriſts own Sacraments by adding to Baptiſm, and taking away half from his Supper, together with the addition of five other Sacraments appointed to be peculiar to ſeveral Conditions and Orders men (which the Lord never intended) are all *ineptæ Teſſeræ*, very unſeemly pledges to oblige men to *Veracity*, being *Falſhood* themſelves.

5. Theſe may by the efficacious workings of Satan, ingage ſouls not to prevaricate from their Faith held (though falſe) nor belye their Fore-Fathers, but take for truth all that they have told them (though nothing but Fables) nor to betray their *Depoſitum* or *Truſt* whatever it be

be. But what is all this to Veracity? We can tell him, that his *Sacrament of the Altar* was used to oblige some of his Profession to be true to their *Trust* in concealing Powder-plots for executing most barbarous and unheard of Massacres. Was this to ingage unto *Veracity*? The good Lord keep poor Souls from being deluded, by such deceits of these supernatural Assistances. *Procul, Procul ite, Profani.*

4. In *S.* 10. He suggesteth this among his *supernatural Assistances*: *That Christian Fathers* (that is, Popish) *cannot misteach their Children unreceived doctrine for received, contrary to their own knowledge; and that without the least good to themselves, to debar them Heaven and send them unto Hell gratis.* Which could not enter into the most depraved nature to harm another without any good to himself. Besides their Sanctity and number and Christs Law of Charity with them, will not suffer them to do such a thing, but keep them to Veracity.

1. We have here another *Crambe-recoction*, but we must labour to digest it, and rid it off; that it offend not too much.

2. Is this a *Supernatural* Assistance to deny, that which could not enter into the most depraved nature to do, even to harm another without any good unto ones self? What doth the man mean by this? Surely his *Super-naturality* is become very low.

3. We question the *Sanctity* of Popish Fore-Fathers, (as we have just cause to do) *and of making Heaven their first Love*, and of their *looking on Spiritual goods*, as their main concern. We must see their progeny, who have received their Faith from them, walk in more spiritual wales, before we can trust this report. Neither doth their number avail with us; for the most may be the worst, as hath been already declared.

4. Christ's Law indeed is the Law of charity, which when written in hearts, inableth them to love Neighbours, and Children in their order; neither will it suffer them to debar any from Heaven, or to send them to Hell *gratis*: But in Idolatrous souls, though Parents, no such law is written; but being deceived themselves they have also deceived their Children, and have barr'd them out of Heaven and sent them to Hell *gratis*. This hath been shewed already: And so it may be still with them that follow lying Tradition. *Quantum*, *Quantum*? O how great is this supernatural Assistance? Miserable children of miserable Parents so misguided.

5. In *S.* 11. He adds another *Assistance as Supernatural* unto Veracity given to his Testifiers of Tradition, and that is, the *great Recommends*, which Christian Doctrine had received from Fore-Fathers; both by the

the Faithful transmission of its serious import, the Universality, conceited wisedom, goodness &c. of the Recommenders: In comparison of which all Recommendation of Natural or Civil Truth, doth levitate like an inconsiderable Feather or Air. These Recommends then must keep them to speak truth.

1. As to this may we mind the *Discourser*, these *Recommends* are not in his terms of the Method of delivering by speech, but only of Christian Doctrine, which is the matter delivered, and was waved heretofore.

2. These Recommends at highest, were but from men, whose *Universality, conceited wisdome and goodness* in speaking for *Tradition*, are very questionable. How then comes this to be a *supernatural Assistance* to Veracity?

3. Whatever this Recommendation be, it hath not kept *Romish-Tradition-Delivers* unto *Truth*; for they have given down deceits and Falshood from Fathers to Children: therefore it hath been no help unto Veracity as to them.

4. If the Highest Recommends may fix unto Truth, we shall give the *Discourser* to consider the Recommends of God himself given unto *Scripture-Tradition*, in comparison of the vast poize and weight whereof all the *Recommendation* mentioned by him, levitates indeed like Air Jer. 23. 28.

and an *inconsiderable Feather*: Yet neither he nor his seduced Papists will receive this Truth of God before their Tradition. Wo unto them self-condemned souls!

6. In *S.* 12. He giveth another Supernatural Assistance unto Veracity, which is Christian Affection of Parents unto Children: This is so efficacious in them to bring their Children to everlasting and infinite Bliss in Heaven, and to keep them from intolerable and endless miseries in Hell, that they must needs speak truth unto them in giving down their Tradition.

1. Why doth the man so trouble his Readers with vain and useless repetitions, We have had Parents Affections once and again urged and answered, their sanctity also superadded, which here he stileth Christianity: and yet all this proved ineffectual to make Fathers speak Truth to their Children; for they have left them lyes in stead thereof, given down by their Tradition.

2. All the Christian Affection, which *Popish Fore-fathers* do express unto their Children is, but to make them *Papists*; and in this way they labour to bring them to bliss in *Heaven*, and keep them from miseries in *Hell*, or leave them in Purgatory. And in this way Parents and Children may perish together, as deceiving and being deceived, with a form of Christianity for the very truth and power of it:

And

And if ſenſation be enough (as he ſaith) to make ſuch Chriſtians, there need no ſupernatural helps, to compaſs this Effect: Neither indeed is this Chriſtian Affection, an ingagement to ſpeak truth, it ſelf being a deluſion.

7. In *S.* 13. He addeth this as a *ſupernatural Aſſiſtance* to *Veracity*, even the *Credit and Repute*, which his *Teſtifyers* look unto in the world among men, that muſt needs keep them from lying: This he amplifieth by comparing it with other mens converſe in the world, whoſe *credit* for *Truth ſpeaking*, is their life in ſociety; and their *diſcredit* for lying their undoing: And at laſt tells us, That the Advantage, which the natural care of *Credit*, giveth to the preſerving Tradition inviolable, is *incomparable*, and in a manner *infinite*.

It is boldly ſpoken: but let us try, whether it be as truly aſſerted.

1. Is *Credite* or *Repute* with men moving us to ſpeak Truth, a *ſupernatural Aſſiſtance?* What is natural then? The very Gentiles that knew not Chriſt, were upon this Account perſwaded to *Veracity*: They were aſhamed, ſome more Moral of them, to tell lyes upon that account.

2. There is a Credit indeed, and a good *Report* with God, which may be a *ſupernatural* help unto *Veracity*; but the *Diſcourſer* ſpeaks not a word of that: After this did all the Saints look, and they had

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It is boldly ſpoken: but let us try, whether it be as truly aſſerted.

1. Is *Credite* or *Repute* with men moving us to ſpeak Truth, a *ſupernatural Aſſiſtance?* What is natural then? The very Gentiles that knew not Chriſt, were upon this Account perſwaded to *Veracity*: They were aſhamed, ſome more Moral of them, to tell lyes upon that account.

2. There is a Credit indeed, and a good *Report* with God, which may be a *ſupernatural* help unto *Veracity*; but the *Diſcourſer* ſpeaks not a word of that: After this did all the Saints look, and they had

a *good report* in heaven, from *Abel* to the last of all as that Catalogue sheweth which the Apostle maketh. And it is written, That only is *Creditable Religion* whose *praise* is not of *men* but of *God*; And he alone is approved, whom the *Lord commendeth*. To this we should yeeld, that such as expect *Credit*, or Praise with God, will think and speak, and do truth.

Heb 11. 2. 39 Rom 2. 29 2 Cor. 10. 18.

3. This being none of that *Credit* which the Author speaks of, as aimed at by Testifiers, We assert it is neither *supernatural* nor can it effectually oblige unto *Veracity*: For what is man to man, but as one lyar to another, who doubtless will applaud; or if the lye be too loud, at least excuse one another. But as to his Testyfiers for his Tradition, if Histories may have any credit, the most debauched fellows and Devils incarnate have not been more brazen faced and impudent in any sorts of lies, than some of them: Men having *Consciences seared with a hot iron*, have been exercised in giving down lying Traditions of *false Mediators*. It is not fit here to relate all Histories; We referre therefore to the faithful Relaters of them.

Mr. *Mead* Apostasie of latter daies.

This prop of Credit then among men, is no *supernatural* help to *Popish Fathers*, or *Pastors* unto Veracity in their Traditions, notwithstanding all other ingagements binding them thereunto. It is therefore *In-*

comparable

comparable boldneſs, and an Evil in a manner *Infinite* againſt the moſt infinite God, who is Truth it ſelf, in this Diſputer thus to vent his own vain fancies for Chriſts Doctrine, and falſeſhood for Truth.

8. Laſtly in *S.* 14. Having laboured thus far to ſupport the Veracity of his *Teſtifiers* unto the Indefectiveneſs of his Tradition, with his pretended ſupernatural Aſſiſtances (though with a very unhappy ſucceſs) He now muſters up a number of *Arts* and *Sciences* contributing to his former witneſſes; telling us withall, that each vertue contributes to ſhew the inerrable Indeficiency of his Tradition: And after an hint upon their ſeveral aſſiſtances, he concludeth, that he hath proved his Tradition to be an inerrable Rule, and made the Indefectibleneſs of it Scientifically Evident, and as ſtrong as nature and grace ſtrained to their uttermoſt, can make it.

O confident man! Who in his witts, that hath ſeriouſly read and conſidered his arguments, can beleeve him? Hath he made his Demonſtration of his *Traditions Indefectiveneſs* as ſtrong as *Nature and Grace* ſtrained to their uttermoſt, can make it? Surely *Nature* is a ſtranger to *Popiſh Tradition*, and *Grace* truly ſo called is an enemy to it, if *ever Grace* dropt from the lips of Chriſt in the Goſpel; For he hath thrown down all *Tradition* contradicting the *Spirit of Scripture* among the Jews;

And would he ſet it up again among Chriſtians? It is impious to think, much more with ſuch boldneſs to utter it.

As to his *Muſter of Arts* for his help, it is ſo ſapleſs and ridiculous that to name them in this great buſineſs in hand, is to ſhew the Author to be ſcarce himſelf in reaſon; when he call'd them in to his Aſſiſtance. It would make a pretty Theme for a *Paſquil*, or a *Romance* to be fram'd upon, or to make a new Comedy of the Arts attending one Complementing, with the Tripple-cround Papal Tradition, and at laſt all vaniſhing and leav ng it to ſhift for it ſelf: But it is a hard taſks to anſwer ſeriouſly ſuch frivolous allegations. Whoever doth it muſt ſuppoſe.

1. That *Arithmetick* can only give the number of his falſe witneſſes.

2. That *Geometry* by its lines, can only meaſure them as earthly minded ones.

3. That *Logick* indeed, will diſcover all the *Paralogiſms* of his *Teſtees*.

4. That *Natures Law* will condemn their forged inventions and Actions.

5. That *Morality* will diſcover his *Tradition* to be *gratis*, to no purpoſe.

6. That *Hiſtory* for ſeveral ages proves his Tradition deficient.

7. That Politicks, if they do favour him, it is in the worſt ſenſe, that is, with ſubtilties and deceits.

8. That

8. That *Metaphyſicks*, can give no *Entity* to that which is not, and that is the indefective deſcent of Popiſh Tradition from Chriſt.

9. That *Divinity*, which is truly the *knowledge of God in Chriſt* revealed in the Scripture, is ſo farre from demonſtrating *Popiſh Tradition* worthy of God, or to bring Mankind to bliſs, that it damns to Hell every way and practice contradicting Scripture-Truth.

10. As to *Controverſie* he doth a little puzzle us; For *Popiſh Controverſie* will ſettle and unſettle any thing for *Truth* or *no Truth* at their pleaſure: But if he will ſtand to the Apoſtles expreſſion of *contending* for the Faith once delivered to the Saints, we ſhall make it good, *there was no ſuch Principle delivered by Chriſt or his Apoſtles*, that *Oral-Tradition muſt be the firſt upon which all others depend.* Nay more, that *Scripture* needs no ſecurity from his Tradition, nor any thing elſe that can mainly concern ſalvation; but that all Tradition Orall muſt be made good by Scripture, or elſe it cannot guide to ſalvation, but to deſtruction, being falſe and erroneous. Jud. 15. 3.

To cloſe: Why doth this *Diſcourſer* ſo palpably diſſemble at laſt, to tell us that he hath many other Teſtimonies of his *Traditions Infalliblenes*, but it is not his Taſk to purſue them? Hath he not repeated the

the ſame proofs over and over to turn up our ſtomacks, if we were ſqueamiſh? Was it not his intended work from the beginning to prove the infallibleneſs of his Tradition to his utmoſt, and yet he ſaith it was not his task? Who can beleeve him? Notwithſtanding the man is content from what he hath ſaid, to conclude that he hath proved it ſelf-Evident, That Romiſh Tradition is an *Inerrable Rule*, and not only *Indefective* but *Indefectible* from Chriſt to this day, and that by the utmoſt ſtrained ſtrength of *Nature and Grace*. Lord open this *Mans eies*. We conclude too: Nothing but the utmoſt of *Satans Efficacy*, *and Mans Luſt*, could work ſuch deluſion.

CO

COROLLARIES FROM THE Former Diſcourſes. EXAMINED.

WE ſhould have thought it the more Natural Method to have drawn Corollaries, after the next proof by conſent of Authority had been joined; but we will not take upon us to give Law to him for his Order [in writing, as he is pleaſed to do unto any others in anſwering: Yet we will follow him in his own Track. Only before we enter upon the Examination of his Corollaries we ſhall lay down ſome Precognitions needful to prepare Readers.

1. *That every true Corollarie muſt be a natural Inference from ſome premiſed Principle Evident, drawing thence neither more, nor leſs, than what is neceſſarily imported therein.*

2. *That whatever the Author have aſſerted of the inſufficiency of Oral-Tradition in general, his Work undertaken is only to make good*

good the actual indefectiveneſs or *indefectibility*, not of *Chriſtian Faith*, *as truly ſuch*, *but of the Romiſh faith meerly*, *as ſtated by his Trent-Fathers*, *to be ſo deſcended from Chriſt and his Apoſtles unto this day.* What he inferrs then muſt be from this only.

3. *That the Diſcourſer in all his precedent paſſages*, *hath not made good the actual Indeficiency of his Romiſh Tradition from the Apoſtles in any one point of Popery*, *much leſs in the whole Maſs of Popiſh Religion.* Let the Reader obſerve and judge.

4. *That all his Corollaries muſt be drawn from this Hypotheſis*, *That Popiſh Tradition is indefective or indefectible in its deſcent from the Apoſtles unto this preſent Age.* Which being moſt eminently falſe, (whereof modeſt underſtanding Papiſts are aſhamed) all his Corollaries muſt appear to be meer cheats or fallacies, or nothing. And indeed conſidering this, together with the unreaſonableneſs of ſome, and coincidencies of many of his *Corollaries*; a man hath reaſon enough to fix his foot and go no further, in confuting that which falleth of it ſelf. But then he will vapour that he is not fully anſwered; we ſhall therefore attempt ſhortly a Curſory over them, a little to ſcan them, and ſhew their faults.

His multiplying *Corollaries* to ſo many and ſuch an odd number as 41, may ca-

ſy

ry ſome *unlucky Omen*, that they will never fall even with the Truth.

1. He inferrs thus. *None can pretend to Faith, (by the ordinary courſe of Gods Providence) but the holders to Tradition.* This he ſaith muſt follow, becauſe Tradition is the Rule of Faith. Cor. 1.

Whereunto thus we ſay.

1. If we take *Faith and Tradition* ſyngeneouſly, both for *ſaving and Apoſtolical*, we grant the Propoſition for a Truth, but not for a Corollarie from his Diſcourſe.

2. *If Faith and Tradition* be underſtood as terms of the ſame kind *both Popiſh*, than the inference may be good thus farr; That *none can pretend to Popiſh Faith, but Holders unto Popiſh Tradition*; and that under a ſevere Providence, not approving but puniſhing ſuch tenacious ſinners.

3. If *Faith* be underſtood to be *Apoſtolical and Tradition Romiſh or Apoſtolical*; We deny the Propoſition as falſe and the *Corollarie* as wholly inconſequent from his Diſcourſe. Men may be true Beleevers in Chriſt who hate Romiſh Tradition, nay men muſt renounce it, if they embrace true Faith indeed.

2. He collects. *None can with Right pretend to be a Church, but the Followers of Tradition:* becauſe none can have Faith without it. Cor. 2.

3. *None can be of the Church*, or *any Church, but the followers of Tradition.* For they Cor. 3.

they must have true Faith, and that only by Tradition.

VVe joyn these together, for they fall in compactly as the whole, and the parts which constitute the whole, of whom the same reason is given: For that which constitutes the parts of a Church, constitutes the whole, and that which destroyeth, one must null the other; VVe shall therefore answer to both in one, with which also the 11th. is coincident.

1. Understanding here the Church to be truly *Christs, and Tradition* truly *Apostolical*, we grant both Inferences to be true: none can be the true Church of Christ, in whole or part, who follow not the Apostles Tradition as in Scripture is fully given to us.

2. Taking Church and Tradition as Popish both. None can be that Church or of it, but the followers of Popish Tradition.

3. Yet looking here on Tradition as Popish, and the Church as truly Christs, we deny both propositions, as false in themselves and no way consequent from his discourse; they being all fallacious, and the indeficativeness of his Tradition no way prooved: Nay such as are followers of Romish Tradition, cannot be of the true Church.

4. VVe cannot but wonder at that distinction of the *Discourser, of the Church*, or *any Church*: *The Church* we suppose to be his *Own*, that is *Popish*; out of which his Fathers have held that there is no salvation; and

and he seems not to contradict them in it; though he doth in other things. And how he should allow any other Church to be, of which no man can be a member, who followeth not his *Popish Tradition*, is one of the wonders, wherewith Satan hath deluded the world. For men may have true Faith who follow not his Tradition, as the means of it; nay this faith they could never have by following it. But probably he may suppose that all men must be of his Church or of none: Yet he may know that they are of a better, who beleeve in Christ according to the Scripture.

4. He gathers, *Those who renounce Tradition or immediate delivery, are* ipso facto *cut off from the root of Faith, and cease to be truly called Faithful.* Cor. 4.

5. *That company of men, who follow such Ancestors as formerly renounc'd Tradition, or immediate delivery, are no less cut off from the root of Faith.* Cor. 5.

6. *They who follow such Ancestors as formerly had manifestly renounc'd Tradition (how numerous soever) can never claim to be a part of Christian Tradition, or deliverers of Faith.* Cor. 6.

These three we joyn together, as being only gradually distinct: And indeed really they differ not from those precedent; for what difference is there between not *following Tradition, and Renouncing it?* or between *not having Faith*, or *not being of the Church*, and

and *being cut off from the root of Faith, and not being deliverers of Faith?* Yet thus *the Discourser* liketh to lengthen, though not to strengthen his matter. In short we return.

1. His ground-work is not made good, but faileth; therefore his building must fall, whatever he superstructs.

2. If Tradition or immediate delivery of Christs Doctrine were here intended, we should grant the Propositions; but not as *Corollaries* from his premises: Men are cut off from Faith renouncing that Tradition.

3. *That Tradition of Christs* Doctrine in *truth* whether *Scriptural* or *Oral*, should be the Root of Faith, is an *unsavory* expression; for Christs spirit only is the root of sound Faith, *Tradition* is but an external means unto it: But being means of *Popish Tradition*, it is a rotten and false conceit of its Author.

4. The renouncing of Popish Tradition, either by Ancestors or *Followers*, is so far from cutting off from the *Root of Faith*, or disenabling a claim to true Faith, or to be deliverers of it; that it roots souls deeper in Christ: And had they not renounc'd it, they would be separate from Christ by cleaving to it. As to his presumptuous suggestions of the Indeficiency or uninterruptedness of his foolish Tradition from the Apostles, it is ludicrous and contemptible being not in the least measure proved by him. The saying

ing of *Vincentius Lirinensis*, together with the *Test of Universality, Antiquity, and Consent*, we grant within the verge of the Church Apostatical adhering to their Tradition: But not to that Apostolical of *Rome* who forge in their *Tradition* instead of Christs.

Id tenamus quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus creditum est Vin. Lir. Cor. 7.

7. *They who pretend themselves Reformers in faith*, (he concludes) *do ipso facto manifest themselves cut off from the Root of Faith and the Church.* For the Doctrine of Faith is indivisible, *&c.*

By Reformers here we take for granted, he means *Protestants*, but he doth belye them, For they were no *Reformers of* or *in Christs Faith* delivered by the Apostles, nor ever pretended to be such, but only to be *Restorers of it*, when it was almost lost in the *Romish Sea of Errors*, and to be *Reformers* of their Enormities in Doctrine, worship, and discipline: Neither for this are they in any more danger of being cut off from the *Root of Faith, or the Church of God*, than *Elijah, Hezekiah and Josiah* for their *Reformations* in their respective times: but this hath been an old slur cast upon them by his Jesuitical Forefathers to be *Reformers* of the true Faith which they detested ——But to this *Corollarie* as thus laid, we do more distinctly answer.

1. His indefectible Tradition was not proved, therefore this cannot follow.

2. We have laid it a groundwork from the beginning that *Faith* with the Rule of Faith ſtand in *Indiviſibili*; It is *ſimple*, therefore *Indiviſible*, not conſiſting with addition or detraction; therefore this cannot be reformed. But Romiſh *Faith and Tradition its Rule* are mixt and compounded things, and therefore are not *Indiviſible*, nor conſiſtent with the ſimple faith of the Goſpel. It is reaſonable enough then to reform them, which if the obſtinate holders thereunto will not ſuffer, God knoweth how to conſume them with the ſpirit of his mouth.

3. The Popiſh Apoſtaſie did interrupt the deſcent of Chriſts ſimple Doctrine in their line, which yet was continued in all thoſe Ages by thoſe witneſſes whom they ſlew, and deſtroyed for teſtifying againſt their Apoſtaſie. So the Proteſtants did ſuppoſe an Interruption Papal, and are blameleſs. This then is no true *Corollarie*; neither doth it hurt us.

Cor. 8. 8. He induceth, *That body of men who adhere to Tradition, can evidence clearly and plainly, who are truely* **Faithful**, *who not.*

Cor. 9. 9. *None elſe can give any certain account, who are to be held truly* **Faithful**, *and of the Church, who not.*

Theſe two are the ſame, only the one affirms ſomething and the other denieth the oppoſite, but it will ſerve to make the number 41.

1. To

1. To these we say, they fall of themselves also, for their ground faileth.

2. Romish Tradition being a falshood, the whole body which adhereth to it, cannot know who are Faithful; no more then crooked can measure or demonstrate strait; but who are unfaithful and erroneous they may know, as *Adam* knew evil by experience.

3. His supposition hereupon is fooliſh, with his Inference. *If Church-Government be instituted by our Saviour, and so a Point of Faith, and so descended to them by the Rule of Faith, they can only tell who are of the Church, who not.* This we say is fatuous; For whatever Government Christ did institute, it was not *Papal*; that Tyrannical usurpation which can own no Father but Satan. These then will be sure to judge none to be of the Church of Christ, who are not of theirs. Herein the Discourser begins to discover himself what matters of Tradition he meaneth to descend uninterruptedly from the Apostles. As well may he tell us that figs grow on Thistles.

4. Scripture Tradition only preached and declared purely, is that Touchstone which discriminates between true Faith and false, and true Church and malignant: We shall retort then one of his Corollaries or both, implicitely. The adherers to pure *Scripture-Tradition* only, and none else can discern, and give a certain account who are faithful

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to Christ, who; not and who are of his true Church, who not: Yet these are none of those who content themselves to talk a few fine pious words of God and Christ, but love him in sincerity.

Cor. 10. 10. He collects further. *None can rationally punish the Revolters from their Faith but that Body which adheres unto Tradition.*

It was likely he would skip from his *Church-Government*, to its tyrannical exercise of punishment against *Revolters* from it, but let him know.

1. This followeth not from the unproved *Indificiency* of his Tradition.

2. Scripture setting since his Tradition, is a full light to convince Trangressors in the Church, and giveth full Authority unto it, to chastise by due Censures unto Edification but not to destruction, as the Papal usurped Power hath usually done, and for which God will account.

3. In his *come off* it may justly be suspected, there is *dissembling*, that he professeth to judge only what is fit to be done on a *Church* and not on a *State-account*; He is not ignorant how much his Church medleth with State-matters. But let it pass: His *Corollarie* is but a *Bulrush*. And therefore we conclude, the Popish Body hath no power from Christ for punishing Revolters from their *Tradition*; for that *it self is Apostasie* from the Truth of Christ. Their *Bulls*

and

and Excommunications with other Engines of Perſecution are but the Devils Thunderbolts.

11. He addes, *No company of men hang together like a body of a Chriſtian Commonwealth, or Church but that which adheres to Tradition*: *viz.* Popiſh. This he hangs alſo upon his Tradition, with many vain words. Cor. 11.

To this. 1. What this differs from the 2d. Corollarie in ſenſe we ſee not, where none are ſaid to be a Church, but followers of his Tradition: Here it is ſaid none can be a Church, who adhere not to it. The anſwer is ſufficient there: Yet becauſe he inſiſts further, we ſhall follow him.

2. This Corollary muſt be nought; for the Principle whence it ſprings is nothing.

3. Romiſh Tradition is no mark of the true Church, but of the falſe, being it ſelf eſtranged from Chriſt.

4. The claim which the Church of Rome maketh upon this rotten and defective Tradition to be the *Church Univerſal*, is moſt irrational and Arrogant: So that to charge it on her as *Antichriſtian Uſurpation*, is no empty noiſe, but an unanſwerable Crime: And ſeeing, that upon this Tradition only ſhe proceeds and by it conſiſts, let her periſh with it. We know an *Everlaſting Scripture Rock of Truth* upon which Chriſtians true Church is built, againſt which the gates of Hell cannot prevail, whatever this Diſcourſer

courser doth vainly clamour against it.

Cor. 12. 12. He inferrs. *There is no arguing against Tradition out of Scripture*: For Tradition only can make it certain.

The irrationality of this must be evident to every serious considerer thus.

1. The want of proof for the Indefectibility of his Tradition which is palpable, and therefore he doth but begg this as he doth in all the rest foregoing and following, which boon if his Adversaries would grant him, he would doubtless carry the world before him, and he might conclude the *Devil is white* by it. But they see better than to gratifie such an Impudent beggar.

2. The Doctrine which the Apostles delivered from Christ, was the same, both as written, and preached; If any therefore by *Oral-Tradition* teach otherwise, that Tradition may be and must be lawfully, not only argued against, but confuted out of Scripture, which is the standing *Register* of that Doctrine: Of which we have certainty without Romes Tradition.

2. By the confession of the *Trent-Fathers* these *Scriptures* which we maintain are the word of God; Therefore all Traditions, which carry deformity to them, are to be not only convinced but judged by them. Who shall judge among men if God by his own word shall not judge? Let the *Discourser* take up second thoughts, and he may see his absurdities concluded to be not only against

against Gods Scriptures, but his own *Trent. confessed Principles. Scripture is Gods word*, therefore it must over-power in judgment *Romish Tradition*, which is not.

13. He collects, None can in reason oppose the Authority of the Church or any Church against Tradition: suppose Popish. For Tradition makes the Church, and that cannot prevail against its *Maker*. This being the same as to think to establish the house by over-throwing the foundation. *Cor.* 13.

What means the Discourser again to mention, *The Church*, or *any Church?* Doth he indeed know that there is another Church besides that of *Rome?* because he is so wary to exclude the urging of their Authority against *his Tradition:* This is somewhat suspicious, that he dares not deny a *Scripture-Church*, which will be too hard for his *Traditionary Body*, as the Ark was for *Dagon*; if their Authority of reasoning were allowed. But to the Consectary it self.

1. It is vain and invalid being built upon a begg'd principle as the rest.

2. Although *Romish Tradition* make the *Church of Rome*, and again that Church make *Tradition*; yet her Authority may as justly in reason be urged against Tradition, as its Authority against her; for they are according to this Discourser mutual efficients of each other. And there cannot be *Oral-Tradition*, before *Men* to give it, and that in a *Church*.

3. *Any Church* in effin tely includes the *Church Apoſtolical* in the r time, and we hope the *Authority of tha Church* may in reaſon be oppoſed againſt *Romiſh Tradition*, for t was none of the l ving Voice of that *Church*, Eſſentia ly taken; however its deſcent is pretend d from it.

4. However ro oppoſe the Authority of the *Romiſh Church* againſt its own Tradition, may p ove ſuch kind of work as to *eſtabliſh the Houſe by overthrowing the foundation.* Yet to oppoſe the power of the *Church Apoſtolical* a ainſt that falſe Tradition, is to overthrow that Apoſtol cal houſe with its foundation togethe , which it will do in Gods appointed time.

Cor. 14. 14 He gathers, *None can in reaſon oppoſe the Authority of Fathers and Councils a gainſt Tradition.* For theſe are Repreſe ta ives o the Church ſpoken of before, therefore Tradition m kes them alſo.

Cor. 15. 15. He adds. *No Diſacknowledgers of Tradition are in due of reaſon, but in courteſie only to be all wed to argue out of Scriptures Letter, Father or Council.* For none of theſe have certainty wanting Tradition, *&c.*

1. We may perceive how this Diſ our ſer multiplyeth his Corollaries *gratis*: for the 12th 13 & 14 h. are taken up in the 15th. Therefore they deſerve little or no anſwer more; but what may ſhew we note them.

2. Theſe

2. These fall as the first, having no foundation, but a denied proposition, never made good, or to be proved by him.

3: The certainty of Scriptures truth and sound Testimonies of Fathers and Councils which are such indeed, is known sufficiently without Romes Tradition. That makes it not, therefore may it in just reason be urged against it.

4. His *Climax* turn'd *Retrograde*, makes a pretty circle. Fathers and Councils are of the Church, the Church is of the Faithful, the Faithful are of Faith, Faith is of the Rule of Faith, and this Rule is of Tradition; This is somewhat strange, for he asserts *Tradition* to be the Rule of Faith it self; how then can the Rule be of Tradition? So again, sometimes Tradition is of Faith, this of faithful, these of the Church, this of Fathers &c. How doth this man confound himself, and the Readers in such a circular walk? If his head be not giddy, it may be quickly by running in this round.

5. We deny that to be any Courtesie from *Rome*, which is a duty injoyned on us by God, and that is to impugn and thrown down the Traditions of men by asserting the written Truths, and Precepts of God: which our Lord Jesus hath done before, and given us boldness to do it without leave from men.

6. His avouching *Tertullian* was vain, unless he first make good, that he meant the same Church, and the same Heretick, which the

the *Discourser* doth, which he will not do; and therefore it is but a bubble.

7. It savours of Luciferian pride for him as an *Advocate* of his *Controvertists* to tell us, they don't allow us our method of arguing from Scripture against them, unless interpreted by the language and practice of their Church, whose glosses are the most intolerable Abuses of Scripture, as ever were invented: which is made good against them in some of the maineſt points of Faith, as they are managed by their *Rhemists*. Neither is it less folly in him to reiterate his scoffs against hammering out the sense of Scripture by *Criticisms*, and such pretty *knacks* of learning; which is all wordish stuffe with him. He hath been answered already, and we shall say no more; But it is such learning as angers the *Disputer* (it seems) for it sheweth the unsavory madness of their Popish glosses.

8. It is bravely said, when they are charged *to desert Scripture*, to tell us, *The unreasonableness of the Calumny*, is to be *made appear*, which is *quicklier done*, *and not our expectation to be satisfied*. We are not outbraved by this, but reply; This is no Calumny to say *Popish Controvertists* desert the *Scripture* as the *Rule and Ground* of their Faith, and maintain *Tradition* only to be it, as the Author doth in his Discourses. Yet we see they are ashamed to own the deserting of Scripture, in that they do count it a

Calumny

Calumny to be charged with it; Yet seeing it is so easie to be made appear to be a *Calumny*, and quickly done, It is strange that the *Discourser* should not take a little paine to wipe it off; for if this were indeed done, our expectations would not be so unreasonable, but that they might be satisfied: But let it alone, seeing it cannot be done by him or any of them, we will expect no longer.

16. He proceeds. *No Authority from any History, or Testimonial writing, is valid against the force of Tradition.* For these writings are subject unto falshood, neither can the true be known from *Fables*, but by the Heart-Tradition from Father unto Son, *&c.* Therefore some living Testimony, *&c.* Cor. 16.

17. He collects *No Tradition is alledg'd or alledgable in reason, against Christian Religion.*

1. That it is not alledg'd he proves from matter of Fact.

2. That it is not alledgable by Protestants, because their Fore-fathers were Papists 100 years ago. *&c.*

These two may well be joyned, for the former forbids History to oppose his Popish Tradition, because it self is strengthened by Tradition, natural from Father to Son; and the latter forbics that Tradition to be urged against his Christian *Tradition*, that is *Romish*: so they seem to be dependent. And so

so we shall reply unto them, and the Confirmations of them.

1. They both fall with the rest upon the account of the sinking of their Foundation, the indefectiveness of Popish Tradition from Christ.

2. The *Tradition* by which History is certified, is *Natural* from Father to Son; who have given down such Books to be of such Authors from Age to Age, and not *Romish* miscalled by him *Christian*. And why may not that have force against *Popish Tradition*; which delivers known untruths, seeing it depends not thereupon, and may give down more Truth concerning History, than that doth of truly Christian Doctrine?

3. It is frivolous to tell us, that falshood is as easily conveied by *writing* as *Truth*, no less is it by *living and Oral-Tradition*.

4. If no Authority from any History can be valid, then not that of the Evangelists, for he excepts none. And what a vain speech is this, that those first Publishers of Christs doctrine from whom he pretends an *indefective descent*, shall be made invalid against his Tradition, when from their writings it shall be convinced to be falshood?

5. It is evident there is as great a living Testimony concerning History, as any for Popish Tradition and greater also, wherein the Discourser may have an equal match, and competent to be alledg'd against it.

6. If

6. If he think to help himself by his next Consectary, that no *Tradition is alledgeable against Christian*; We should grant it concerning the true *and infallible Tradition* of Christs own doctrine by his Apostles, and their sincere Followers, for this excells all Tradition in weight, though not in number: But since it is clear that he intends thereby *Popish Tradition* only, we deny it and assert natural Tradition of History doth out-number them; and true *Christian Tradition* of Gods saving Truth doth outweigh them; and therefore may justly be alledged against them.

7. His suggestion is false that the Protestants alledge no Tradition against them: for they know they have alledged *Tradition* both *Scriptural and Oral*, given from faithful witnesses slain by them in several Ages for their testimony unto Jesus against their lies and corruption of the Gospel-Truth. As to what he urgeth of Dr. *Whittaker* and Mr. *Powel*, *That the time of the Romish Churches change, cannot easily be told*: He should have cited the places, but in short this we do say: The whole business of Popery was carried on in a *Mistery* suitable to its Title the *Mysterie of Iniquity*. And *Rome* was not built in a day: But the gradual Apostasie to several false doctrins of *Transubstantiation*, *and Image worship*, &c. is discernable enough in several centuries. And the *Trent-Convention of Anathematizers* of them

them, who kept to the full and sincere faith of the Gospel, may be truly judged to give the perfect *System* of their abominable untruths gathered form the former Ages of that Apostasie. His Tradition then is not so impregnable. Suppose it be not very easie to discover the secret Methods of Satan for above 1600 years past, inventing and hammering the *Mysterie of Iniquity* to bring it to this Body in *the Papal Head and Body*. If we now see it plainly, that *Popish Tradition* hath compleated this *Mysterie of Iniquity*, and set it up against the *Mysterie of Godliness*, even *God manifested in the Flesh*, that only *Mediator* between God and man, and forging other *Demon-Mediators* to intercede with God for sinners, Is there not just cause to urge this against all Popish Tradition, which falsifieth the same? Let Readers judge.

8. As to his plea against any alledgableness of *Tradition* by *Protestants* now against this, because their Fore-fathers little more than 100 years since were *Roman Catholicks*.

1. We say, all our Fore-fathers were not such then, and before that time; for there were many persecuted by his Fore-fathers to death for testifying against *Romish Tradition*.

2. We take not our faith from our Fore-fathers, but from Christs own Tradition of his Fathers will unto Salvation, however we acknowledge

acknowledge them Inſtruments of making known, that to be the Goſpel of Chriſt, and bleſs God for them.

3. Fathers have been Apoſtates from Gods truth in the Church of the Jews, and yet their Children have been reclaimed by their Paſtors: So it may be in the Chriſtian Church, and hath been without endangering the loſs of true Religion by *Tradition*; for thereby they might have walkt in errors ſtill.

4. As for having recourſe to the Greek Church; we bleſs God for any truth continued with them, and pity any miſtakes among them: Neither ſhall we diſdain to call them Fathers for any truth of Chriſt, we have learned from them, though they be not our natural Parents. Natural Fathers do not beget us ſpiritual, as Chriſtians indeed muſt be. God uſeth other Inſtruments moſt times for Regeneration; as the Apoſtle owneth the Relation of Father to the *Corinths* upon that Account. This therefore profits not the *Diſcourſers* Tradition, nor hurts ours. We have one God and Father in Heaven of whom are all things, and we to him; and one Lord Jeſus Chriſt by whom are all things, and we by him, whoſe *Truth* delivered in the *Scripture*, we ſtill maintain as the Rule and Ground of our faith, and alledge in his name againſt all *Popiſh Tradition* obtruded on us by this Diſcourſer, and his Compeers. Theſe Corro-

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laries then we throw out among the reſt.

Cor. 18. 18. His Conſectary is. *No ſolid Argument from Reaſon or Intrinſecal Principles, is producible againſt Chriſtian*, that is, *Popiſh Tradition*. For, this is built on the beſt nature, that is mans, &c. He addeth; *No poſſibility of arguing with any ſhow of reaſon*, & Cor. 23.

Cor. 19. 19. He annexeth. *The arguing by way of ſome few Inſtances (as the manner is,) can have no force againſt Traditions Certainty, and Indefectiveneſs.* This he ſeeks to ſtrengthen from contingency in ſome particulars, which makes not a general failing of Tradition: This he amplifies with many needleſs words.

Theſe with the 23d Corollarie we ſhall conſider together: In the 18th. he denieth all ſolid *arguing from Reaſon againſt his Tradition*. In the 23th. *All poſſibility of arguing with any ſhow of reaſon againſt it.* In the 19th. He denieth as bordering upon *Reaſon*, the arguing againſt his Traditions Indefectiveneſs by way of ſome few inſtances of *Traditions failing*. Unto theſe we ſhall ſhortly return.

1. The Diſcourſer might have ſaved himſelf and Readers much labour if he had drawn all from the 12th. hitherto into one *Corollary, viz.* Suppoſing his *Tradition certain and indefectible*, that there is no Argument from any *Medium, Scripture, Church, Hiſtory, Reaſon*, &c. againſt it.

2. But

2. But his *Tradition Popiſh* is not certainly deſcended from Chriſt, nor indefective; therefore all his Conſectaries are vain and fooliſh.

3. However againſt *Chriſts* own *Tradition*, (It being infallible, and the higheſt Reaſon) there is no arguing with any ſhew, much leſs ſolidity of reaſon; yet againſt this *Romiſh Tradition* carrying in it many irrational things, there is the greateſt reaſon to be urged againſt it: the edge of which the *Diſcourſer cannot* endure, when it ſhall evince the whole fabrick of *Romiſh Religion* irrational, by the light of nature, as well as Scripture.

4. His pretended beſt nature of man, upon which he builds his Tradition, his ſenſations, cauſes of preſerving it, and his moſt powerful aſſiſtances, have been already proved corrupt, vain, deceitful and miſtaken. Theſe therefore cannot ſtand againſt the force of ſolid Reaſon.

5. Suppoſe humane nature were ſo good, as to prove a ſutable *Baſis for a Rule of Faith* (which none can be but God himſelf) Is all humane nature laid as the foundation of Popiſh Tradition? Surely then all muſt be *Romiſh-Catholicks* from *Adam*: Or, if not, there is reaſon enough from men to confute his *Romiſh Tradition*. If he ſay *Papiſts are men*; let them be ſo: Yet all *Humanity* is not incloſed in them, upon which he fondly builds his *Tradition*.

6. Is there not an Intrinsecal Principle in
Acts 17. the soul of man, which is a reasonable and eternal spirit, teaching him, that the God who made it, is a spirit, not dwelling in shrines or houses made with hands but in a spiritual house compacted of living stones; and that such a God must be worshipped in spirit and Truth? And shall not this Reason evince that such *Tradition* is vain, false, and to be loathed, that shall pretend from Christ that God is to be worshipped by Images, and with such apish gewgaies, fooliſh gestures, postures, mumblings, and histrionical carriages as the Papists do use, and their Priests seducing them? His reason must be blinded who seeth it nor.

7. In reference to the 19th. Cor. Is not this a Truth upheld by the cleareſt Reason that the failing of any one integral part destroyeth the Integrity of the whole; and so makes it defective? Is not reason to be heard when it saith, that man is not whole or intire, but defective who wanteth a leg or Arm, *&c*? And is it not as rationally argued, That *Tradition of Rome* is not intire or perfect, or intirely descended from Christ, but *defective*, the particulars whereof are supposed by the Discourser himself to fall short of him? *Contingency* in this case pretended will no more prove Popish Tradition intire or *Indefective*; than that a man is intire because by chance he lost some of his members. But not to stick at this, Take we *Po-*

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piſh Tradition in the bulk of it, as meerly ſuch, and contradiſtinct to *Chriſtian-Tradition* of the *Trinity* or *Incarnation*, *&c.* (which yet the Doctors of *Rome* do not ſoundly hold, though they ſay the ſame Creed with us) it is no hard task to make a full induction of all particulars therein failing, and ſo the Defectiveneſs of his *whole Tradition* from Chriſt, but this is no work for this place. As to his ſuggeſtions of preſumed miſtakes, intereſt of parties, *&c.* to ſtrengthen his *Contingency*, they are vain, and falſe, and fall with it. And laſtly, to his magiſterial Rule teaching ſolid men in anſwering his Traditions demonſtrableneſs to ſhew the *Incoherence of the Terms* (we ſuppoſe Tradition and *Indefective*) it is returned, there is an utter inconſiſtency between *Popiſh Tradition*, and *Indefectiveneſs* of deſcent from Chriſt; for it is abominable to him and never came from him or his Apoſtles: therefore the Incoherence, and more may appear to them who will ſee and conſider. *Chem. Exam. Concil. Trid.*

8. To the 23. which we conſider in this place, becau e it is either coincident with the 18th. or worſe, that is, *Non ſenſe*, we thus reply.

1. All his proofs are but his formerly begg'd principles and Corollaries, and he ſhrowds himſelf under the notions of *Chriſtian Tradition*, *and Catholick Church*, while he is as far from it, as Antichriſtian from

Christ; or East from West.

2. His so often boasting of living Testimony is a *Chimera*, a witness from such as are dead while they are alive. There is a spirit of life indeed, and power from God in the Scripture, against which all his *Traditionary Troops* are not able to stand; and from hence are raised up still living witnesses, who have wounded his Traditionary Beast so much, that though his Limbs seem to stirre and struggle a little, as if he were reviving, yet is he caught fast enough, as a wild Bull in a net, kept to be destroyed. Vain helpers are his discoursing Auxiliaries by their Tradition.

Cov. 20. 20. He collects, *That denying Tradition (viz. Popish) is a proper and necessary disposition unto Fanatickness.* For it cannot be denied but by pretending some light within from the first Cause, *&c.*

Cov. 21. 21. He concludes, *Fanatick Principles can have no force against Tradition, though unconfutable but by it.* For nothing can shew evident Principles contrary to it, but his Tradition, *&c.*

These two also, seeing both concern *Fanaticks*, may be well joyned in a reply together which we shall make concisely to them. Seeing in the one is pretended the *Cause* of that distemper of *Fanaticism*, even the *denial of his Tradition*, and in the other is prescribed the *Cure*, viz. the receiving *of it.*

1. The

1. The Diſcourſer doubtleſs was reſolved to have a fling at the Fanaticks, or elſe very little overture was given him to make thoſe Corollaries, from his pretended Tradition; but when he hath done, it is to no purpoſe to build theſe upon a begg'd foundation, which is already taken from him; therefore can infer no ſuch thing.

2. If denial of *Popiſh Tradition do properly and neceſſarily make Fanaticks*, then all muſt be Fanaticks who do deny it, that is, who are no Papiſts; for all Proteſtants do deny his Tradition, as well as other Chriſtian Churches: Never heard we Fanaticks ſo handſomely characteriz'd and deſcribed before. This is enough to make men poſt to Popery, that they may ſhun the mark of a *Fanatick*, of which name ſome are more afraid, than to be called a Papiſt. His Holineſs oweth him a good reward for this. Yet he adds a ſelf contradiction, when he ſaith, *men may be ſo long preſerved from Fanatickneſs, as they follow Tradition either in his Church or ſome other Congregation*: which muſt be divers then from his, and deny his *Tradition*: however they maintain That of the doctrine of Chriſt written and preached by the Apoſtles. He did ſuſpect this would be urged as a better preſervative; and ſo thought beſt to joyn it with his.

3. *If Fanaticiſm be* (as he defines it) *a Pretence of ſome inward Light or knowledge extraordinarily infuſed by the firſt cauſe to attain*

tain Heavens Influences, without help of ordinary Waies, as preaching his Word, appointed by God himself: then there is no greater Fanaticism in the world than *Popery*, nor worse Fanaticks than some Papists have been, who by their extatical Postures, raptures and lying wonders, have drawn aside multitudes of simple souls to beleeve the *Popish-Legend Traditions*, with pretence of immediate light from heaven without ordinary means. The narrative of which is made clearly by some of their own. *The reviving of this Tradition then is a more proper disposition to Fanaticism.*

4. Let Fanatick Principles be what they will, or let them have as little force against *Popish Tradition*, as the *Discourser* can imagine; Let he and they try it out; It is none of our Interest to maintain them: we have one sword of the Spirit which is the word of God, by which we can sufficiently defend Gods saving truth and cut the throat of lying Tradition, and all other Satans methods of deceiving souls unto perdition by false pretended lights.

5. Lastly to lay aside this great *Battle-Axe of Fanaticism*, (it having not been worth the taking up at all in our business) we cannot but tell the Discourser, it is one of the greatest absurdities that hath fallen from the mouth of a man pretending to reason to say, *Fanatick Principles are unconfutable but by Popish Tradition*: Whereas a little before he had

had ſaid, Men might be preſerved from them by the ſence of Chriſt declared in other Congregations, as well as by the Fathers in his Church: now if that means can give preſervation from it, needs muſt the ſame give confutation to it. We ſhall ſay no more to it, being not worthy of any further confutation; we have light and ſtrength enough through Grace to confute Fanatick Principles without his help. To try his ſtrength yet, it were deſirable, that all the Fanaticks were let looſe upon him, to baite him with their Arguments, they might perhaps ſhake him and his Tradition to pieces, and make better ſport than any *Bear-baiting* unto theſe Gentlemen, whoſe heels he labors to trip up by his *Sure-footing*.

22. He infers again, *There is no arguing againſt Tradition*, that is Popiſh, *without queſtioning the Conſtancy of every ſpecies in Nature, that is the certainty of whole nature.* His proof is from his former preſumptions on Mans nature denied and diſproved; wherewith he notes, that all Arguments againſt him are only fetcht from Contingency to ſome few, which witty Reaſoners would argue as poſſible to all, with a *why not*; And ſo oppoſe any conſtancy in the natural kinds, and deſtroy their own Arguments to boot. Cor. 22.

What will not this man ſay, who ſo confidently over and over ſaith this which

is so irrational? We have declared the sottishness of his comparing the fruit of his Tradition, with the propagation of natural kinds before, and his preferring that before this; and therefore need say no more to this but lay down the contrary to it, That *arguing against Popish Tradition is rational and powerful, without questioning the Constancy of every species in nature, which is the Certainty of whole Nature*, and put him upon a better proof. Yet not to weary Readers with these many repetitions, in short we say further.

1. This must fall, because his *Tradition with its Indefectiveness*, whence he draweth it, is fallen before it: which is enough.

2. Yet suppose his Tradition were certain, How possibly can the denial of that bring into question the certainty of whole nature? It is such a monstrous inference, that may make young Sophisters start at it. What a vast difference hath been shewed between the state of natural causes and voluntary; and natural effects and voluntary, and natural contingencies and voluntary, that is, such as fall out in the ordinary course of nature, and such as depend much upon the will of man, though under an over-ruling Providence? And can there be any lawful arguing from *voluntary*, such as Tradition is to *natural*, such as all the kinds of Creatures in Nature are? This Gentleman hath set up a new Logick for his Popish Schools, which

which they may receive but we ſhall not: He that denieth any one to be an honeſt man, doth not therein deny him to be a man. Is this arguing *à Fortiori*? Let wiſe men judg.

3. To diſpatch this, we ſhall give him but *Note* for *Note*. His note is, That it is a wild kind of roving, thus to argue from Contingency againſt his Tradition; *Some particulars of Tradition have failed, therefore all may*: Or: *Some few, men can erre*, therefore *all can*, whereupon he jeers them with a *Why not*. Our note unto him by retaliation is; (This Maxim granted, *That it is a general accident unto all Men to erre*) That which is competent to this and that man, and the other man as men, is competent to all men; But, to erre is competent to this, and that, and the other man, *&c.* as men; Therefore, It is competent to all men. Is not this good Logick? Let the Diſcourſer tell us: *Why not*: Surely, This is pitiful Logick, which the Man ſuppoſeth, Romiſh Tradition may fail, or be defective from Chriſt; therefore every *ſpecies* in nature, or *whole nature* may fail, and be uncertain. This is as good arguing, as from *Chalk to Cheeſe*. Let the Diſputer reflect, and by a better conſideration he may find that the Proteſtants in denying his Tradition do not deſtroy but confirm the Certainty of nature, and their own Arguments to boot.

Humanum eſt errare.

Quod convenit tali qua tale, convenit omni tali.

23. His conſectary is, *There is no poſſibility of arguing at all againſt Tradition rightly*

rightly understood, or the living voice of the Catholick Church with any shew of Reason.

We think we rightly understand his *Tradition to be Popish Tradition, and his Catholick Church* to be *Roman Catholick*, to whose living voice, we have given answer under the 18th Corollarie; and here shall adde no more, only noting its order:

Cor. 24. 24. This is made a Corollary. *Tradition is the first Principle in way of Authority, as it ingageth for matter of Fact long ago past.* For all is resolved into Tradition.

Cor. 25. 25. This is another. *Tradition in the matter of Tradition,* (that is, in matter of Fact *before our time*) *is self-Evident to all those who can need the knowledge of such things, that is to all Mankind who use common reason.* This he saith is evident from the former.

Call ye these Corollaries, They are Coincident and the very same with his first proposition of his work undertaken, *That Tradition is the Rule of Faith,* which must be *First*; and with the first condition proposed of that Rule, which is *Self-evidence*? This seems to be strange work; yet shortly we return thus further.

1. Understanding *matter of Fact* here to be the actual delivering down of the Doctrine of Christ from the Apostles pretended to be Indefective to this Age, we deny the Proposition,

position, as we have done before, *Popish Tradition* is no first Principle giving Authority to any matter of Fact in that kind, but using its power rather to undo it.

2. *Tradition* in this matter delivered by *Romish* witnesses is not *self-evident* to men who should use their Reason to know the things, which concern their salvation, as hath been declared already. Again if both these were rational Consectaries; they are false, because *Tradition-Popish* is defective. Let these go.

26. It followeth. *The Certainty of Tradition being established, the whole Body of the Faithful, (by which I mean Catholicks,) or the Church Essential, is by relying on it infallibly certain, that it is in possession of Christs true Doctrine.* This he builds upon his former grounds. Cor. 26.

27. It is inferred. *Tradition once stablisht, General Councils, and even Provincial ones, nay particular Churches are infallible by proceeding upon it,* This he laieth on the same ground. Cor. 27.

28. Yet further. *The Roman See with its Head, are particularly Infallible by the same means.* All this is given on the same account, Cor. 28.

The Discourser might have saved himself with his Readers and answerers, much labour, and to as much purpose, if he had put 7 of his Corollaries into one, these three named and the four next following; for they all

all proceed from the ſame ground preſumed, *viz.* The Certainty of his Tradition eſtabliſht; which being falſe and denied, all theſe muſt be falſe and fall with it. Yet to ſilence clamour, we ſhall ſhortly return to each of them.

1. Unto the 26th. taking his meaning to be of Popiſh Tradition and his Church eſſential of Roman-Catholicks, we deny that the certainty of his Tradition pretended to be from Chriſt is eſtabliſht as Truth; therefore that his Church relying on it cannot be infallibly certain thereby that they are in a poſſeſſion of Chriſts true Doctrine: But ſure they may be, that by their *Traditionary Leaders* they are laid upon a foundation of lying vanities. Poor ſouls to be lamented and prayed for, that their eies may be opened to ſee the way of eſcaping out of the ſnares of their deſtroying Guides.

2. To the 27th. The reaſon as he ſaith being the ſame, we reply, that his Tradition being not eſtabliſht, *No Councils General, Provincial, nor particular Churches, can be Infallible by Proceeding on it:* Nay they are all deceived and deceiving, who are guided by it; Here we may remind the Man of his circle, The Church and Councils *&c.* muſt by their Teſtimonies make ſure Tradition, and then by another turn round, Tradition muſt make them Infallible.

3. To

3. To the 28th. issuing from the same ruin'd principle *of Popish Traditions certainty*, we say, neither *Roman See*, nor *its Head*, which is *the Pope*, can *particularly be infallible by that means*. And indeed it is enough to deny, untill the Discourser acquit himself better, in prooving his Traditions certain Indefectiveness. Yet we may a little animadvert the Ingeny and confidence of the man in reviving the fable of his *Popes Infallibility*, whereof wise and *modest Papists* have been ashamed; Yea and his new way is a little considerable, that he will make it good by his Tradition: the certainty whereof is but a lye. Is all the virtue fled from the Pontificial chair which was wont to be urged for it? And is Christs promise made to *Peter* worn out which was wont to be applyed to their *Popes* to make them *infallible*. *Thou art* Paul, *thou art* Innocentius, *thou art* Alexander, and upon thee will I build my Church? Doth all this fail his Popes, that he must come to support the *Infallibility* at last with his uncertain Tradition? O miserable head of the See of *Rome*! All else here added are but such like Fables; as of St. *Peters* being at *Rome*, where he never was, unless it were *Babylon*, which some of them grant, to prove him to have been at *Rome*: God in that, had a pure, poor, persecuted Church there, when the Apostle *Paul* suffered under *Nero*; but alas no *Papal Pompous See*; this is utterly

Apostate

Apoſtate from that. And for his uninterrupted publicity of Profeſſing faith there, as now is continued, is a vain ſtory: The truth of God and the true Church of God were preſerved in his *perſecuted Portion* all along, even thoſe who ſuffered as he ſaith, by Barbarians. Laſtly, his Traditional Aſſiſtances to that *Head*, that *See and Clergy of Rome*, to make up this infallibility for them, are moſt cheating deluſions and delitious ſhifts. Let but their own Hiſtories of the ignorance and ſcandalouſneſs of many of thoſe *Heads and chief Paſtors of the Roman See* be read, and then judge what Aſſiſtances they had from Gods ſpirit, who abhorrs ſuch unclean wretches; and what Piety or Infallibility could accrue unto them, ſeeing they were acted by Satan, who ruleth in the Children of Diſobedience. Wiſely therefore did the Diſcourſer forbear to mention the particular Aſſiſtances of Gods ſpirit, the far contrary being known to his Adverſaries to rule at this day in his *Roman See* even the efficacious deluſions of the old ſerpent

I refer to that Book intitled *Romes* Triumphs over deſpiſed Proteſtancy. *ch.* 7. for a ſhort view.

Cor. 29. 29. His Inference is. *Tradition eſtabliſht, the Church is provided at a certain and infallible Rule to preſerve a Copy of the Scriptures letter truly ſignificative of Chriſts ſence, as farre as it is coincident with the main Body of Chriſtian Doctrine preacht at firſt.* This he argueth from his Indefective Tradition.

30. He

30. He urgeth. *Tradition eſtabliſht, the Church is provided of a certain and infallible Rule to interpret Scriptures Letter by, ſo as to arrive certainty at Chriſts ſence, as farre as that letter concerns the Body of Chriſtian Doctrine preacht at firſt, or points requiſite to ſalvation.* He argueth it from his Traditions preſerving the firſt delivered ſence in mens hearts ſent down by its living voice, *&c.* Cor. 30.

If theſe hold true, the *Diſcourſer* may hope to triumph bravely over the Scripture of God, when he laieth both letter and ſence of it, under the foot of his Tradition: Never could there be a clearer Character of Antichriſtian Pride than this. Yet we return.

1. The Certainty of Popiſh Tradition is not eſtabliſht, therefore the infallible Rule of preſerving Scriptures letter, and interpreting it unto Chriſts ſence is become moſt fallible, like a broken Reed deceiving them who lean on it, whoſe ſplinters run into their very ſouls and hurt them, ſo that they fall together with it.

2. Although that be enough to undo the mans *Sure-footing and Corollaries* which he makes terrible to his Adverſaries: Yet we ſhall proceed to animadvert ſhortly ſome things in his inlargements thereupon; as,

1. His aſſertion that *the Apoſtles taught the ſame Doctrine, which they writ*; if ſo, than they writ all the ſame which they taught and

and which is the more certain Record of that Doctrine? their writing which remains, or their ſpeech which is paſt away long ſince, and hath been diverſified and corrupted thorough many generations, and none can doubt but that *written Regiſters* are more certain and ſtedfaſt than *reports*. However the *Diſputer* moſt irrationally aſſerts that his Popiſh fore-fathers have uninterruptedly ſpoken all the ſame words after them to this generation. If it be ſo, will they bring all that they hold to be of *Traditionary faith* from them, to be tried by their writings? They dare not, they decline it, they hate that light, which reproveth their darkneſs.

2. Doth his Tradition, (if he had it ſetled) preſerve the Scriptures letter? It is that by which the *Diſcourſer* doth impeach the letter of Scripture of uncertainty, weakneſs, liableneſs to Corruption *&c.* throughout his Treatiſe. And will not this prove as good a preſerver of it, as *Jael* was to *Siſera*? Surely no better than a Deſtroyer of it. Jud. 4. 21.

3. Yet he pretends better when he adds that his Tradition provides an infallible Rule to interpret Scripture-letter unto the Church, and give Chriſts ſence in it, therefore it muſt preſerve it. This is pretty; Provided that his *Tradition* may give the *ſence*, then it will preſerve *Scriptures letter*. Shameleſs Impudence! Scripture is a Light diſcovering

discovering it self and darkness also. *Popish Tradition* is a lye; and to be an infallible *rule* of giving Christs sence, none can beleeve but the *Romish Church* which is adulterated from Christ by it. In a word, if this Tradition can give Christs sence in Scripture why doth not this *Discourser* and his Tribe give us such an infallible interpretation of the whole Scripture? This would be a most honourable work; But alas, how farre are they from that? And if they did give us any, it would be like to that gloss of some of his Fathers, *Arise* Peter *kill and eat*, that Act. 10. 13. is, *Arise Pope and kill the Hereticks*; or like his own of those few Texts that he urgeth, which is sapless and ridiculous.

3. We cannot but note his limitation given in both Corollaries (As farre as the letter is coincident with or concerns the body of Christian Doctrine preacht at first, or points requisite to salvation) what may this mean? Is there any other Doctrine of Christ besides that first preacht? or, any more points requisite to salvation expected to come after? Some such device the Man hath which his next words perhaps may bewray. But however Tradition gives no such infallible Rule, as is here pretended, for points of salvation.

31. He draweth on; *Tradition establisht,* Cor. 31. *nothing can be received by the Church as held from the first, or ever, unless held ever.* This he grounds upon certainty, and self-evi-

dence of his Tradition.

Cer. 32. 32. He putteth on. *Tradition eſtabliſht, it is impoſſible any Error againſt Chriſts Faith ſhould be received by the Church; that is, no Error contradicting Faith, can be received as of Faith.* This he grounds on the former, that which is received as of Faith, is received as held ever from Chriſts time, *&c.*

Here be ſtrange Iſſues of *Popiſh Tradition* indeed. It will make nothing to be received as held ever, but what is held ever: And puts an *Impoſſibility* of any Error contradicting *Faith* to be received by the Church as of *Faith*, becauſe *that of Faith* is received as *held ever*. O marvellous! Was it *ever or never* that this Tradition could do ſuch Feats? But let us weigh.

1. Popiſh Tradition eſtabliſht, as to its certainty and Indefectiveneſs is ſuppoſed indeed by the *Diſcourſer*, but denied by us; therefore be it what will, that thereupon is received, as *held ever of Faith*, or rejected as *Error*, never poſſible to be received by the Church, It is all as *falſe and defective* as Tradition it ſelf.

2. Doth the man mean by things *held, ever received*, or not *held ever received, matters of Faith*? His words expreſs ſo; *To be received as of Faith is to Traditionary Chriſtians*, (that is his own) *the ſame as to be received as held ever or from Chriſts time.* If ſo, what point of Faith is that which his

his Church receiveth as held not ever delivered from the time of Christ? He would have done well to give us an instance: But seeing he hath not; we shall only remind him, what he hath before granted, that the Doctrine of Faith consists *in Indivisibili*, or *undivisibile unity*, which cannot be *one held ever, and another not held ever*: Himself saith notwithstanding, *Points not held ever, must be conveied down, such as they were found*; which we understand to be points of Faith: and again, *That which is of Faith is received as held ever from Christs time.* This seems to be a perplexing knot of Traditions making, and implieth a pure contradiction. *All of Faith is held ever.* Some *Points of Faith are not held ever:* but we shall cut it if we cannot loose it, and throw it all away as *Bedlams work*, who are tying knots in straws, having nothing else to do. We grant one Faith from the beginning *ever received*, even the *Doctrine of Salvation by Christ promised in the seed of the woman*: And all that the Prophets and the Apostles gave down afterward were not other doctrins, but explications and manifestations of the same. So that Scripture faith is *one and that held ever.* Popish Tradition faith is *ever and not ever held.* And better it were, that it had been *never.* For it was *never true.*

3. We shall touch these Corollaries but once more. The most of Faithful Tradition of Christs Doctrine by the Apostles them-

themſelves could not keep error out of the viſible Church in their time: How then dareth this *Diſcourſer* aſſert, that by his Tradition eſtabliſht, it is impoſſible any Error againſt Chriſts faith ſhould be received by the Church? But thus the Devil transformed into an Angel of light, braggs to outdo God himſelf in his own work: and under this pretence plungeth ſouls into the Abyſs of Error. This is not only the poſſible; but the neceſſary Iſſue of *Popiſh Tradition* in the Church of *Rome*. The man hopes to mend his former Corollarie about Error in his ſeven next Concluſions following; which with him paſs under the *Title of Corollaries* as following from the *Principle of his Indefective Tradition*; But every one may ſee they have no dependence on that; for they refer all to the Impoſſibility of Errors being received in the Church by vertue of his Tradition. And are all Exceptions, limitations, *&c.* Which it will be enough to cite for orders ſake, and leave a mark upon them.

Cor. 33. 33. He adds. *Notwithſtanding Tradition, Erroneous opinions, and (their proper Effects) abſurd practices may creep into the Church, and ſpread there for a while.*

1. Is this a *Corollarie* from his firſt Principle? Surely the man forgets himſelf in his reckoning of this and divers others under that notion, unleſs he reſolve to have them ſo to make up his number of one and forty.

2. If

2. If it be a *Corollary* let him salve the contradiction which it giveth to the next foregoing, *By the virtue of Popish Tradition, it is impossible any Error against Faith should be received in the Church.* And again, *Notwithstanding such Tradition, it is possible that such Errours and absurd Practices may creepe into the Church, and spread there a while*: Was the man sober, or in his wits thus palpably to lay Contradictions together in every ones view? But we will excuse him, and take it for no *Corollary*, but as an exception to correct his former; yet must we tell him it shakes the *uninterruptedness of his Tradition.*

34. He saith further. *Erroneous Opinions can never gain any solid footing in the Church.* Cor. 34.

This is an *Exception* from an *Exception*, That however *Tradition Popish* cannot wholly keep out Errors from creeping into that *Church*, yet it will prevent it from gaining any solid footing there; and so farre uphold its own credit, for this would be *no Sure-Footing*. But alass it is so notoriously apparent, that their Tradition hath filled that Synagogue with such odious Errours, subverting the Doctrine of Salvation, and by continuance hath so rooted them not to be separated, untill divine wrath consume them, and *Rome* together. That day of the Lord is hastening.

Cor. 35. 35. He proceeds. *The prudence requisite in Church Government is one cause, why Erroneous opinions are not immediately, but after some long time perhaps to be declared against by the Authority of the whole Church.*

This the Discourser himself surely will not stile a Corollarie from his first Principle; Let it be then an Apologetical *Proposition* by way of prevention of an objection, that Errors have had *long fooling* in the Church of *Rome*: He tells us prudence requisite in Church-government is the cause of it. If such Prudence be requisite, it must be required by Christ: But his wisedome declares the quite contrary: He rebukes the Angels of the *Asian* Churches for their connivance at, and toleration of *Balaams Doctrines and Jezabels Spiritual Sorceries*, and threatens them severely for it. He never intended by respiting *Tares* to grow a while with wheat, *Erroneous doctrines* to be permitted to grow together with *Truth*, for the sooner these are pluckt up, the firmer will the Truth be and prosper; And to use Authority from Christ for this with the soonest, cannot be to destruction of souls, but to the greatest Edification of them in delivering them out of the snares of Error: but alas, this prudence commended by the *Discourser is Earthly sensual, and devilish* whereby the *Romish See* hath still been guided: For should they set upon rooting up Error, they

they must throw down the whole Fabrick of the *Popish Church*, which consists of little else, But their *Father* the *old Serpent*, hath taught them his wisdome; That to cast out error and wickedness, were to destroy their whole Kingdoms, both his and theirs. Let the Discourser answer; Is it truly Prudence not to declare against sin.

36. He annexeth. *No erroneous Opinion in Divinity, if Universal and Practical, can be very long permitted in the Church.* Cor. 36.

What means the man so frequently to contradict himself? He said but now, *Some long time Erroneous Opinions might be suffered.* Here he saith *Erroneous Opinions in Divinity* (which we understand about the Doctrine of Faith) *cannot be very long permitted, &c.* Doth he think, that his Readers do observe him? This deserves an Asterism. Doth he imagine to evade it by his supposition, (*If universal and Practical?*) All Errors in the Church of *Rome*, are such as that *Doctrine of Transubstantiation, and that against Justification by Faith in the Righteousness of Christ only, &c.* and yet are not only permitted, but injoyned to be beleeved under the penalty of a *Curse*, by the *Trent-Anathematizers*. His pretended reasons are frivolous, and his conclusion ridiculous, that these Errors are quasht by the *incomparably more powerful force, and all over-bearing Authority of Popish Tradition.* O stupendous virtue of lying Tradition to destroy it self!

Cor. 37. 37. He pleadeth on *Erroneous Opinions, and the Irrational practices iſſuing from them (though ſuppoſed Univerſal and of long continuance) can never corrupt Subſtantially the judgments or wills of the Faithful.*

This poſition certainly is put in but as a plea, if any ſhould charge the *Incomparable Power, and over-bearing Authority* of his *Tradition* with a *cheat*; when he ſaith it will quaſh Errors, and every one, that will look about may ſee, that it doth in no kind reſtrain them. Now for a *Salve* he adds, though Errors be not quaſht, yet by virtue of his Tradition, *they can never corrupt ſubſtantially the judgments or wills of the Faithful.* — Poor man! to what ſhifts is he driven to maintain a bad cauſe? But what means he here by that ſpecificating term (*ſubſtantially*) Doth he joyn it with the verb *Corrupt*? Then the ſenſe muſt be they cannot *really*, or (as he ſaith) *abſolutely* corrupt: Or, doth he annex it to *Minds* and *Wills* of faithful, which is the ſubject of corruption? Then *Subſtantially* to corrupt, is according to the *ſubſtance and nature of minds and wills*, which is, *the very faculties* themſelves. We ſhall eaſily grant that error corrupts not the very *Faculties* of mind and will; but he muſt underſtand it of a *Moral* corruption, depraving the *judgments and wills* of men, as to their Imaginations, thoughts and practices in their courſe of life. Now in this caſe, Error it ſelf is *ſpiritual*

catching

catching poyſon: Error univerſal and of long continuance, habituated in men, is deadly poyſon againſt which there is no Antidote. Therefore no *Tradition* even the beſt can cure it of it ſelf; much leſs *Popiſh Tradition*, which is it ſelf a complexion of all Errors againſt the true Faith; A very mixture of unmixt ſpiritual poyſons, ſo far from being an *Antidote* againſt bad opinions and practices, that it is the very ſpring of all, the Iſſues of which muſt be death and deſtruction of ſouls. As to his reaſonings about this, they are vain reiterated Ventilations: O vile Tradition of *Rome*.

38. He aſſerts. *No Erroneous opinion or its proper practice, is imputable to the Church properly and formally taken.* Cor. 38.

39. *It is exceedingly weak, and ſenſeleſs to think to impugn the Church by objecting unto her ſuch opinions and practices.* Cor. 39.

Theſe we joyn together, becauſe the Diſcourſer hath coupled them to make a ſhield or buckler to defend his Church from any juſt Imputations, that he foreſaw muſt be laid upon her from thoſe univerſal and long continued Errors in her: Give the Son leave to purge his Mother as well as he can from her Adulteries, though but by covering her ſhame with fig-leaves. It concerns his own credit: But it will be all in vain before ſeeing and impartial Judges, For

1. The

1. The Romish Church is *formally* such, as she proceeds on *Popish Christian Tradition*, (as the man here saith) Now this Tradition deriveth down such falshoods as Christ abhorreth; therefore these Errors and Practises abominable issuing thence, are imputable to that Church as *formally* taken.

2. Whereas he transfers the charge only upon some men in the Church (*materially* considered) that is, to the *Schools*; we ask, whose *Schools* are these? are they not *Romes* under the *Power of the Church and Roman See?* Should they not correct them? nay they have maintained them only to justifie their Errors; and are they not then justly imputable to that Church? Yet we confess, our thoughts are that some of their *Schoolmen* are much honester, than *their Trent fathers* and deliver more Truth in some Doctrins of Christ than they do; and therefore are lesse culpable, though too too blame in corrupting the Gospel with their foolish *Quiddities* and speculations.

Qui non vetat peccare, cum potest, jubet. Sen.

3. But it is a wise objection (as the Disputer flouts) that the Church hath in her *men* who are *fallible* in their private discourses, and *School disputes*, that is, she hath *men* who are *men*. A heavy Imputation! Yet we reply. It is no weakness to impugn the *Romish Church* by objecting to her such Errors and practises: More sence is in it, than he will be able to answer: we charge not *men as men, and private members* subject

to mistakes; but the whole *Body* of the *Roman See* to be guilty of these abominations. And he with his Fathers shall find it, when God shall plead with their Mother, and charge her to be *Mysterie-Babylon the Mother of Harlots and Abominations in the Earth.* Though *Romes Children* laugh at this now, yet it will prove an *Imputation* heavy enough when the Lord God Almighty shall come to judge her. Beware ye Scorners.

4o. He inferrs again, *The knowledge of Traditions certainty, is the first knowledge or principle in Controversial Divinity, that is, without which nothing is known or knowable in that Science.*

Were this but granted him with his former begg'd *Principles* and Corollaries, he would be the greatest and most victorious Champion that ever *Rome* sent out against the Protestants: *Bellarmin, Coster, Suarez. &c.* the Bratts of that *Gyant Ignatius Loiola*, would be but *Pygmies* in comparison of him: Yea we dare assert that among all the *Mendicants*, that the *Pope* alloweth, there is not a more *hearty confident or Impudent Beggar* (if you will) than He. But we are a little hardned against *common Beggars*; and deny him again *the certainty of his Tradition*; and therefore *That it is the first principle in Controversial Divinity*; which no man (we think) did ever make a *Science*, or number it among the *Sciences* before himself: But truly, he may make any thing

thing a *Science* and what he will *knowable*, if he have but this granted him, *That Popish Tradition is certain and Indefectively descended from Christ*: It would be a *Scientifical medium* to prove, That the Devil in a Creature is to be worshipped instead of God: or what not, to maintain *Romes* Idolatry? But we are Owners of our Alms; therefore let him pack away like a sturdy Beggar, as He is.

Cor. 41. 41. He concludeth. *Christs Promise to his Church (however comfortable to the Faithful) can bear no part in the notion of the Rule of Faith, nor be the first Principle of a controversial Divine.*

Is this is a Corollary from his presumed Traditions Certainty? He is a notable *Artist to wire-draw* this, and exclude *Christs Promise* from bearing a part in the *Rule of Faith*, or steering men in *contending* for his faith, which we understand by his *Controversial Divines*; as for other vain whifflers or *Logomachists* in his Schools, Christs *Promise* respects them not, neither do we regard them: As to his reiterated Ecchoes and noises in the air, we are even weary to hear them, they have been answered over and over. And therefore shall we conclude, *Christs Promise* to his own true *Church* (*not to the Popish*) is not only comfortable to the truly faithful, in giving hope of guidance in truth, here and of eternal and invisible glory in the end of their way; but as it is

part

part of Gods reveal'ed will in his *written Truth*, it beareth its part also in the *Rule of Faith*; which must regulate it in its exercise toward God; however *the Discourser* wilfully mistakes *means to faith*, for the Rule of it, as hath been told him heretofore.

Passing by therefore his vain Exceptions of *Christs promise* being a *Point of Faith*, and thereupon no part of the Rule; and of the self-evidence of his Traditions Indeficiency; and of the weakness of Scriptures-letter opened by private Interpretations, which have been re-recocted to the very vomiting of them up; we shall only animadvert upon his last suggestion against Christs promise bearing a part in the Rule of Faith, *viz.* Because Christs promise puts things delivered to be *beleeved, not seen*: What strange discourse hath the man here, about a matter little concerning his Cause? Unless as he would have it, the Rule of Faith where the object is sence: Means to faith indeed are applicable to senses of hearing and seeing; but the Rule of Faith, concerns the spirit of Faith only, working in the inward faculties of the soul, Faith therefore is said to be the *Evidence of things not seen*, which are matters in promise, and we as beleevers are said to live by *faith* and not by *sight*. Things therefore not seen, must draw out and regulate acts of faith. How then can this Discourser exclude Christs promise from bearing a part in the Rule of Faith? By his leave therefore, He that saith of any Event

Heb. 11. 1.

2 Cor. 5. 7.

Event, that Gods will bringeth this about by the secondary Cause, speaks proper enough, as *Philosopher and Divine*. And no less he who asserteth Christs Promise by his spirit and word, is the Basis, Rule and Principle of saving faith; and that by which men can only contend victoriously for the same. But all along this man hath been doting upon a sensitive Faith; or a Faith that works no higher than sense carrieth it; such is his *Philosophy and Controversial Divinity*. Let him injoy and reap the fruit of it: We contend for faith without seeing, founded in Gods word; for of this our Lord hath said, *Blessed are they who have not seen and yet beleeved.* Here is our Sure-footing; *Let the Disputer keep his.*—— Thus have we plaid out with him his *New game* at *one and Forty*; For indeed no better a *Title* doth it deserve; and might all have been spared but for his *Recreation*; *Clubs* and *Spades* he makes use for *Mechanical Beleevers*. No *Hearts or Diamonds*, which are of a more Ruddy and spiritual Hue. Who hath won let standers by and lookers on Judge. If he have any other Mysterie in this *odd number*, as the *false Church* hath in other things, Let it serve among the rest to characterize their Falshood. His Tradition hath gathered no credit to its Indefective certainty out of all. For,

Joh. 20. 29.

As of nothing, nothing can be made,
So from Tradition nothing can be had.
He must therefore go and begge more.

CONSENT

CONSENT OF AUTHORITY

To the Substance of the

Foregoing Discourses

EXAMINED.

HAving spent his strength of Reason for his *Traditions Indefectiveness*, (how little soever, and with how little success let Reason in the Intelligent Readers judge) he now layeth aside his own bulrushes, and calls in Auxiliaries to second him by a consent of Authority; which may distresse him, but yeeld no support to his Cause; and then he is left miserable bereft of his *Reason*; and his *Friends* to boot, whom he beggs also to yeeld Assistance, but they hear him not. We have here offered by him these general Heads as to his closure.

1. Authorities urged as consenting, three fold, 1 *Scriptures*, *Ss.* 2, 3, 4.——2 Councils *S.* 5.——3 Fathers. *Ss.* 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13.

2. A

2. A Question proposed and answered, *S.* 14.

3. Notes upon the Authorities alledged, *S.* 15.

4. A Declaration of his Churches sence in his Doctrine, *Sf.* 16, 17, 18, 19, 20.

Among his consenting Authorities, he giveth the Scriptures the first place; and its consent he only beggs, and that in vain, in three Eminent promises; which we shall orderly consider. But before we examine what consent they give him, or not give him to establish his Tradition: we shall only hint some special animadversions about the whole *Authority* of them urged.

1. He giveth the Scriptures of God the only *Authority of consenting* to that Doctrine of *Popish Tradition*, which his reason had forged, and as he thinks, establisht: And is not God upon this account much ingaged to him for this honour vouchsafed him to come and begge his *Consent* unto his vain Invention? We are by the light of nature guided to ascribe the *Supreme and commanding Authority* to God, whose word must be the *Creatures Law*: And is he now call'd in as a *Consenter* only, and put in *a second* form of *Power*, as we usually make *Consent*? See the Antichristian Pride of Popish *Reason* and Religion setting the Almighty God in the same *Classis* of *Authority* with Councils and Fathers.

2. He

2. He yet alloweth the *Scripture* to be in its consent an *Authority proving his Tradition*: And is not the *Medium proving* more *sure and known* than the matter proved or concluded? How then can *Tradition* be more *certain* than *Scripture*, seeing the *Discourser* urgeth *Scripture* to prove the certainty of his *Tradition*? The Apostle *Peter* on whom these *Traditionaries* do depend, as on their Rock, prefers the word of Prophesie written for certainty before his own *Tradition* given of *Christ*, which was grounded upon his own eyes and ears. What Logick this man hath, who pretends to so much, we know not: but surely he sheweth little here.

A notiori ad ignotius, is Scientifical.

2 Pet. 1, 17, 18, 19.

3. Suppose we, that it is no more but *consent*, that he beggs from *Scripture*; what is this worth, seeing it is a *Consent*, which he espouseth only by *force*? When the *Scripture* can come to speak for it self before fair and equal *discerning Judges*, it will clear it self, that it never gave *consent* unto this *Discourses* abuse of it, and will charge him with a worse violence, than for a man to force a womans *Consent* to marry him by his pistol or sword.

4. We shall desire the man candidly to answer; Will he warrant us, that the *Interpretation* of these *Scriptures* which he urgeth is *Traditionary*, that is, according to his sence, the very same, which was the mind of Christ in them, and so uninterruptedly descended

descended to him by *Tradition*? Let him speak out: But that he loveth not book-learning much, as he professeth, he might find many of the *Pillars* of his own *Church* disowning his *Interpretations* of them. However were he and they all agreed in such a sence, as he makes, it is all but *private Interpretation* estranged from the opposite to the *Innate sence* which the spirit delivered to, and by those Prophets; which will appear unto a serious and due consideration of the occasion, Scope, Logical coherence and signification of the words: all which means the spirit useth, to open Gods mind in *Scripture* unto men. These things being generally premised, we shall proceed to consider the special Texts alledged by him; whether they give their consenting Authority to his *Indefective Tradition* or not.

Τὸ ἴδιον opposed unto τῷ πνεύματι. 2 Pet. 1. 20. 21.

1. He urgeth, Isai. 35. 8. of which place, 1. We have his Translation thus: *This shall be unto you a direct way, so that Fools cannot erre in it.* 2. His Interpretation, *That is*, saith he *Evident to the Rudest vulgar, or self evident*; else Fools might possibly erre in it, in case it needed any skill of Discourse, and were not obvious to common sense. So then his sence of it is *This*, that is, *This Method of Popish Tradition, shall be to you a direct way*, that is, this *Method of Popish Tradition, shall be to you a direct Way*, that is, to you *Papists Traditionary Christians*, a plain and straight

ſtraight means unto ſalvation: *So that Fools cannot erre in it.* That is, *the rudeſt vulgar* among *Papiſts*, continuing ſuch *fools* as to the knowledge of God, and living by common ſenſe, cannot miſcarry in it.

Unto this we ſhall but oppoſe the Truth of the letter, and natural ſenſe; and then let wiſe men judge how this Scripture is forced by him for a *conſent* to his *Tradition*, which we ſhall do in this way.

1. We give *Scriptures Readers* this note. That this Evangelical Prophet under the Jews Captivity unto, and deliverance from *Babylon*, deſcribeth both ſpiritual bondage to ſin, and redemption from it: Both are to be conſidered in the preſent promiſe.

2. The true literal reading of the whole Text is this: *And there ſhall be a troden path and a way* (ſuch as we call a *Foſſe-way*) *Even the way of Holineſs ſhall be called on it, the unclean ſhall not paſſe over it; but this ſhall be for thoſe*; (*viz.* whoſe hands and feet were confirm'd and ſtrengthned, *&c.*) *He that walketh the way, even fools ſhall not erre.* Here is difference enough between Readings.

3. The meaning then of it, as it concerns ſpiritual Redemption (typed under the return of the Jews from *Babylon* to *Sion*, by *the Decree of Cyrus*) is this, *Gods high-troden-Foſſe-way to Salvation*, is the *way of Holineſs in Chriſt Jeſus*: *The unholy and uncleane*

shall not passe over it, indeed they cannot, their feet sute not with it; but they, whose feet are strengthened and cleansed shall pass thorough it, yea he *or they who walks his way of holiness*, though formerly fools *and ignorant of the way* unto salvation, yet now having God with them, and being confirmed unto his will, taken off from folly, even these *shall not erre*, or mistake the way to heaven. This is the naked and innate sence of this Promise; and what agreement hath this with the Discourses glos? God saith, *Holiness* is the way which will lead men to salvation, and they shall not erre: And the Discourser renders it, *Romish Tradition* is the way to salvation, in which though fools do walk, and abide such, yet they cannot erre. What Intelligent Reader will not nauseate at such senseless and unsavory glosses as this. But it may be he will better it in the next; we shall try.

2. To prove this way meant of Tradition, he tells us the same Prophet doth expresly declare it. Isai. 59. 21. in these words: *This is my Covenant with them, saith the Lord; my Spirit which is in thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart from thy mouth, and from the mouth of thy seed, and from the mouth of thy seeds seed from henceforth for ever.* His Interpretation runs thus. 1. It is a promise of perpetuating Christs Doctrin. 2. That it expresseth on what manner; that

that is, as he saith, by *Oral-Tradition*, or delivering it from Father to Son *by word of mouth*; not by a *Book*. 3. That this *Tradition shall be indefectible and Uninterrupted*. 4. That the Spirit is in the Church and will be ever, supernaturally to assist her in this work.

Whereunto we shall only oppose these plain things evident to all rational observers in the very letter of the Text.

1. That in this and the former verse are given to us two main Articles of Faith in Promise. 1. The *Redeemers Advent* 2. The *Fathers Covenant* to him, and in him to his seed the Church.

2 That after the promise of the Redeemers coming to *Zion* (that is, his *Church*, *turn'd away from their Iniquities*) he declareth his Covenant both to him and them; wherein his Son manifested in the flesh the Redeemer, is the first party with whom the Father covenanteth, and his seed begotten out of his bloody Travels are secondarily in and by him Parties confederate with the Father; so that none but these are in this Covenant or concerned in any of the matters mentioned therein. Isai. 53.10 11.

3. That under *Spirit and word* are carried all *Grace* tending to salvation, both given *to him* in the flesh *without measure* and to his seed according to their respective measures assigned them; He was *anointed* with the *Holy Ghost and Power*; or as paraphrased Act. 10,38 Ps. 45 7.

1 John 2. 20. 27. with *the oil of gladneſs above his Fellows*; they alſo receiving in their proportion of the ſame anointing which muſt needs keep them unto ſalvation.

4. That this is God the *Fathers own Act* incommunicable to any other, to put his *Spirit upon Chriſt and his word or will in his mouth*, and ſo upon his ſeed, and his ſeeds ſeed, in their perpetual generations, they do not, they cannot convey or put this ſpirit and word one upon another: It is his own Tradition.

5. That this Covenant the Father himſelf will perform and execute upon this ſeed of Chriſt only in their ſucceſſive generations for ever, while ſojourning in this Earth: The fruit whereof doubtleſs muſt be *ſpirit and mouth-profeſſion* of the *Fathers love* while they have being. And to all this the Prophet adds three times here Gods *Teſt*, that *Jehovah hath ſaid it*; therefore it muſt be done.

Now this being the plain and ſimple ſence of the words, what can this promiſe have to do, with *Romiſh Church Apoſtate*, or with *Popiſh Tradition* of Fore-fathers to their Children by word of mouth? Could ever the beſt of Fathers living put *ſpirit* upon their Children, or the *word and will* of God into hearts and mouths to be beleeved and really profeſſed and practiced by them, by their *Oral-Tradition*? *Cain* would then have been as good as *Abel*, and *Iſhmael* the

ſon

ſon of Promiſe as much as *Iſaac*: Much leſs can Popiſh Fathers do it. We grant that the Doctrine of Chriſt unto Salvation is contained under this *ſpirit and word*: but the *Tradition Indefectible and uninterrupted* together with the *perpetuation of it*, in the ſeed of Chriſt only, throughout all their generations, we aſſert peculiar unto the Father alone in his Son and by his Spirit: Theſe are all the true words of *Jehovah* which he hath promiſed to perform himſelf, and thereby to fix his fear in the hearts of his, that they ſhould never depart from him. What violence then is this that the *Diſcourſer* ſhould transfer all this unto *Popiſh Forefathers*, as if they could put the ſpirit upon the *Redeemer*, and Gods word into *his mouth, and his ſeeds by their Oral-Tradition*? And what madneſs is it to arrogate this ſpirit for *ſupernatural Aſſiſtances* to his *Romiſh Church*, who with her ſeed is a bitter enemy to *Gods word*, (as this *Diſputer* confeſſeth) unleſs it may be fenced by his Tradition? It is as mad a prank for this man to challenge *the Church* to be his, that is, *Popiſh*, as it was of that mad fellow, who would call every *ſhip* his own, that he ſaw and yet he had none at all. But it is enough for this. God knoweth them that are his. And his ſpirit and word abiding on them will declare them. Let them who have eyes to ſee, ſee and conſider.

3. His laſt Teſtimony for conſent of Scripture unto his Tradition is Jer. 31. 33. *I will give my Law in their bowels, and in their hearts will I write it.* This he interprets by the Apoſtle in the 2 *Cor*, 3. 3. Where he deſcants on the Terms, *Heart, Fleſhie*, e. i. *&c.*

We allow his Tranſlation, but deny utterly that this Scripture or that by which he would interpret it, giveth the leaſt *conſent* to his *vain Tradition*. That of the Prophet is recorded alſo by the *Apoſtle* to the *Hebrews* as a copy of that better *Teſtament*, whereof *Jeſus* was *Mediator*, whence we have help for a *better Interpretation* than what the *Diſcourſer* would impoſe on us by and for his *Tradition*.

1. We deny that either here by the Prophet, or elſe by the Apoſtle, the *Law of Grace* is oppoſed, or contradiſtinguiſhed to the *Law of Moſes*, as to the *ſubſtance* of it; For *Moſes* wrote of *Chriſt*, as *Mediator*, and of the ſame *Covenant of Grace*: Only the *Forme and manner* of delivering and miniſtring this *Teſtament*, was vaſtly different as to the Efficacy of it, between *Moſes* the *Servant and Chriſt the Son*. This adminiſters it *powerfully as God*, in and upon *Hearts*; but he though *faithfully* yet *weakly* to eies by writing on ſtones, and to ears by voice and ſpeech. Whereupon God promiſeth here to make a new Covenant, not according as he had done when he brought their

Fathers

Fathers out of *Egypt* which they brake; and ſo he regarded them not: but now by Chriſt he would make ſure work to write his law in the hearts of his Covenanted ones, ſo that they ſhould not depart from him, nor he any more forſake them.

2. We aſſert that all ſpoken in this promiſe are *Acts of Grace* peculiar unto and poſſible only for *Jehovah* himſelf to do, as 1. *That of Adoption, I will be their God, &c.* 2. That of *Juſtification, I will forgive their Iniquity, and remember their ſin no more.* 3. That of *Regeneration* or *Sanctification* with the ſaving Effect of it, deſcribed indeed by *Metaphorical terms of writing*, but properly noting the change of their nature; when hearts, inward parts and *whole Man*, ſhall be delivered up to the will of God, and be conformed to it. Whence moſt inſeparably followeth the ſaving knowledge of God which comprehends all duty into him, from thoſe Hearts.

3. We note alſo that God by the Prophet expreſly denieth any work of man or his *Tradition*, as to the producing of this effect, They ſhall teach no more every man his neighbour, *&c.* ſaying know the Lord, *&c.* Not, but that God hath appointed *Tradition* both *Scriptural and Oral* as ſubordinate means to ſaving knowledge, as he injoyneth in other places: but in this place he ſpeaks of his own work only reciprocal with himſelf, declared in this Teſtament what he will do by his

his own finger as to the saving of his Covenanted ones.

Now these things being so apparent in the native sense of this Scripture: Who seeth not what violence is offered unto it? when the writing this Law in hearts, is wrested to this corrupt sence, of making men acquainted with the law of God, that they by *Tradition* should convey it down to others: And the work spoken of in this Text is only the Lords, wherein mans help of teaching is excluded? How much more Impudence is here discovered in *Coster the Iesuite* and others of his Tribe with this *Discourser*, who transfers all this to *Popish* rotten Tradition, which giveth no sound knowledge of God at all, but keepeth souls in dismal destroying Ignorance *of the mysterie of his will*? But their folly is made known, enough to make it odious and ridiculous in this matter: As well may they hope to evince this sense from this *Scripture* as that *Philosopher* who would fetch fire out of the Sea. They will prove Arrists alike. Could ever any of them say so, as to do it, by their Tradition, that all to whom they spake from the greatest to the least shall know the Lord. O be ashamed!

4. The corruption of the Apostles words is as bad.

1. In setting the *heart* whereupon this law is written in contradistinction to the *Brain*, that is *Affection* unto *Reason*; where-

as

as nothing is more clear, than that all the faculties of the soul are here intended by *Heart*, and this as bringing in the whole of man, which God doubtless intends, when he calls for mans heart.

2. In a most abusive glos upon the word *fleshy*, which he makes, to note the Inferior part of the soul, even *Sense* and sensation: whereas he that runs may read that the Apostle opposeth *Fleshy Tables to stony ones*, whereon the law was written; And in this case *Flesh* is the paraphrase of *Tenderness of Heart* as *the Stone* is of the *Hardness* of the same: and so usually are they opposed both by the Prophets and Apostles: So that the sence is plain that the Epistle or mind of Christ was written by the spirit of the living God upon fleshy, soft and tender hearts not upon stony, hard, and unyielding ones. What blindness or perverseness then is it, to turn this so as to note the Inferior part of the soul, meer natural sense, when it signifieth the whole soul sanctified? And to make this to be the work of Gods spirit by sensations to force into men natural knowledge, when it is to renew and regenerate men, by giving up their hearts to Gods will *metaphorically* expressed by writing his Law within them. Thus when *Popish Tradition must sence Scripture*, this must needs give *consent* to that, to be *Indefective* from Christ. Understanding Readers will see hence, what *Consent* he hath obtained to his *Rule of faith* from

Ezek. 11. 19.

from Scripture: And for his belying God in his own word we leave him to his reproof: But for his abusing men in his *Circular notion* from *Tradition* to *Scripture* and from *Scripture* to *Tradition*, he deserves an *Hiss* from junior *Sophisters*; as well as a check from his *Superintendents*, for such unhandsome medling in Scripture debates with Protestants, of which he had warned his *Romish-Catholicks* before with an *Item* that their Adversaries having hooked them in to fight with their weapon, would even cry *Victoria*; and now he falls into the same fault himself. Alass poor man! But so it is that *Popish Doctors* could never do their work without *Scripture*, and when they use this two edged sword, having neither wit, nor honesty rightly to wield it, they blunt it what they can; but it pierceth and destroyeth them, being turn'd against them. For shame let them meddle with *Scripture* no more, to begg help from it; For it hath them in derision.

2. His next rank *of consenting Authorities* is humane; only here it is *Compl'exe* in *Councils*, the Representatives of the Church as he makes them: Among which he only nameth three in this order. 1 The first Synod of Lateran. 2. The Council *Sardica*. 3. The 7th. General Council of (as he calleth it) All as he saith consent to his *Indefective Oral-Tradition*.

To return ſhortly and enough to theſe 1. Generally. 2. Specially. 1. In General we animadvert, that the *Diſcourſer* urgeth his *Conſenters diſorderly*; For that of *Sardica* was much elder to the firſt *Lateran*: That being held under Pope *Julius the firſt* about *An. Dom.* 340. or a little after: And this was held under Pope *Martin* about the year 643. Order therefore might have ſet the eldeſt firſt. 2. That in theſe Councils or ſome of them, the notion of *Tradition* is intended by the moſt ancient of them, eſpecially of *Scripture-delivery*; and moſt uſually; therefore the *Diſputer* is either unwary or unfaithful to annex it only unto *Oral-Tradition*: So alſo is it uſed by the beſt of the Fathers to note *Scripture-Tradition* from the Apoſtles. 3. We acknowledg no *Council* expreſly infallible, but that one of which we read, the *Holy Ghoſt* was *Preſident. Act.* 15. Others have proudly boaſted of his preſence with them, but in vain. 4. As to all Councils, ſince that we profeſſe our Faith concerning them, to be the ſame with our Church of *England* in theſe words. *General Councils may erre* &c. *Therefore things ordained by them, as neceſſary to ſalvation, have neither ſtrength nor Authority, unleſs it may be declared, that they be taken out of Holy Scripture.* Upon this ground, we deal with the *Diſcourſer* and ſhall not ſhrink from it: Unleſs Scripture Authorize both Councils and Tradition too, we ſhall truſt neither of them:

them: And this might be a sufficient answer from us to this Authority.

2. Yet more specially, least he may think we fear his Witnesses.

1. As to the *Lateran* Testimony, all that he urgeth is, They substracted nothing of those matters which were delivered to them by the Holy Fathers: Grant this, Those things were delivered first from the Holy Scriptures, as well as taught them by voice. Let the man disprove it if he can; if not, what helps this consent?

2. As to that of *Sardica* (however it hath been branded and rejected by Ancients; which is enough to suspect it) yet all urged here is nothing to the purpose; For if it were that they did hold Catholick Tradition, Faith and confession; This was by Scriptural, as well as by *Oral delivery*. Nay *Osius* a Bishop (as their own *Caranza* giveth it) against ordination of Laicks, urgeth that Scripture against Novices, So that here was use of written Tradition in this Council expressely, though unknown to this Disputer.

1 Tim. 3. 6.

3. As to his 3d. It was the 2d. *Nicene* Synod, which the Greeks (as the same *Caranza* reports) did call the 7th General Council held in the year 780. under Pope *Adrian the first*, Bishop of the City of *Rome*, which was celebrated against them, who condemned Images in Churches, and cast them out, wherein it was decreed, That images were relatively to be worshipped, and the Reliques of

of Saints honored. This being declared by their own Hiſtorian, and other idolatrous and abominable Conſtitutions (for which it hath been branded for a Filthie Conventicle) the Diſcourſer might be aſhamed to urge it as a *Conſenting Authority*, and that under the Title of the 7th *General Council*, when there was never ſo many ſtiled truly *General*, by almoſt half the number: But he had no better to make uſe of for his purpoſe; Therefore his *Tradition* maketh this a *General Council*, and then the *Authority of this* muſt prove his *Tradition Indefective* from Chriſt; and ſo we run the round ſtill. Yet we may excuſe him, for he had much need of this Council to make his *Tradition of Image worſhip indefectively deſcenaed* from Chriſt. Let him hugge it, and perdition with it; but we abhorre it as an odious Conſpiracy againſt the Lord and his Chriſt.

3. His laſt conſenting is humane alſo from ſingle witneſſes, ſuch as he calleth Fathers, though all of them deſerve not the Name. Popes may be his Fathers; they are none of ours. He urgeth ſome paſſages out of ſix of them; which we ſhall ſhortly review.

1. In general we premiſe, 1. We honor the venerable name of Fathers in the Church, where truly named. 2. We ſay alſo according to our Church, Scripture is not to be beleeved for Fathers ſake, but

Fathers

Fathers for Scriptures sake: When they leave this they speak as men and so are to be esteemed. 3. *Tradition* generally used by them signifieth delivery of Gods mind by Scripture, as well as voice, and under both these not the manner but matter of Tradition, which is the will of God. Which being applyed to all his particular Instances, might be reply sufficient to the purpose for which he urgeth them: For he overlooks and mistakes them both in their Authority and use of the word *Tradition*, which he claims every where to be understood in his sence, for delivery oral, from mouth to mouth.

2. In special we return. 1. To his *Celestin* (whom he stileth *Saint and Pope*;) Two Titles that seldome have met together, if we may believe his Historians concerning the lives of his *Popes*. Yet we have to do here with what he saies, more than with what he was: And to that which is urged by him, *That We should believe and retain what to this very time came by succession from the Apostles*: And did not the *Scriptures* come down to us by that succession? what makes this passage more for *Oral-Tradition*? Nay to what follows, the Apostles did leave us the Scriptures, therefore we must follow them. And whatever he speaks more of his Testimony relates as much to scriptural, as to *Oral-Tradition* from the Apostles: which we have cause to beleeve, because

becauſe the *Epheſine Council* under him, did confirm their decrees by *Scripture* as their *Caranza* reports. He is then our witneſs for *Scripture* more than his for *Oral Tradition*, to be the *Rule* of Faith, not the way to it, as the *Diſcourſer* uſually confounds them.

2. As to *Origen*; whoever knoweth him can never beleeve him to reſt he againſt *Scripture Tradition*: For he is all or moſtly upon it; Only his ſlip was to abuſe it too much by *Allegorical Interpretations* of it. He cannot therefore aſſiſt the Diſputers cauſe for Oral-Tradition oppoſed to the Scripture; unleſs his *Allegories* be Tradition.

3. As to *Tertullians* vote, *If thou beeſt but a Chriſtian beleeve what is (Traditum) delivered, &c.* We queſtion not this *Delivery* to be from *Scripture*, which we find him often to urge in his Diſcourſes with the Adverſaries of Chriſts Incarnation, we do not therefore truſt this mans interpretation of him: however, we have much more to ſay about this witneſs.

4. As to *Athanaſius*: it is wonderful that any ſhould be ſo impudent to urge his Authority for *Oral-Tradition* againſt *Scripture*, when every man may ſee that he confuteth the *Arians* from the Scriptures; and when he uſeth the word *Tradition*, he muſt underſtand it, that, which iſſueth from the written word, and is conformed to it, unleſſe he

would undo his former proofs. He therefore will not help *the Discourser* in the Cause for which he produceth him.

5. As for *Clemens Alex.* It is most shameful that this man should pick out some independent shreds out of his discourse and pervert them to his corrupt ends; when as he is known to be a most strong Assertor of *Scriptures Power and Authority* to be the *Rule of Faith*; and sheweth it to be the Cause of mens Errors, that they forsake that *Rule of Truth.* He that will know the true Testimony of this witness must read him.

6. His last is *Austin*, whom whosoever urgeth as a witness for *Oral-Tradition* against *Scripture*, must have a face of brass; for none more maintains the *written Truth* of God to be the Rule of faith than He. Wilfully therefore must this man mistake him under the notion of *Tradition* which with that Father refers to *Scripture*; but he returns it to his *Popish Oral-Delivery.* None of these then speak home to his Cause, though he doth most impudently begg them, or force them. We shall therefore stay no longer on this Head. It is not seasonable here to insert those Testimonies of Fathers against him, which are numerous, and would swell into a volume. The Champions of our own Church who have entred those lists heretofore with the Jesuits have given large Discoveries of them. He that will see the votes of *Greek and Latin Fathers* in this Controversie

Controverſie may read many compacted in that famous *Chamier* more faithfully, and fully to give ſatisfaction in this matter. And ſo we leave him *Fatherleſs* in his generation. *Cham. To. 1. lib. 9. c. 18, 19, 20, 21.*

2. His queſtion propoſed is: *How ſhall we know who enjoyes this Tradition?* or *what points have been handed down by it from the beginning?* His reſolution of enjoyment, is unto his own Mother-Church of *Rome* doubtleſs; that ſhe enjoyeth it in her living voice, which he would prove by *Irenæus, Tertullian, and Chryſologus.* And concludes his Diſcourſe true from Effects in Renouncers of Tradition, that there were more Hereſies in the firſt 400 years than in any 400 after, *&c.*

We ſhall ſurvey this a little. 1. In his one Queſtion we have two.

1. *Who enjoyeth this Tradition Indefective from Chriſt at this day?*

2. *What points have been handed down by it from the beginning?*

We ſhall note; That his pretended anſwer is only to the firſt, unto the ſecond he ſpeaks not one word: which had been *Honeſty* to have done, and would have given us more light concerning the matter in debate, than any thing in all his diſcourſes.

2. We animadvert, that to the firſt Queſtion he anſwereth not one word directly but obliquely he inſinuates it muſt be the *Church of Rome*; for he hath told us before,

That none hold *Tradition* or are *Traditionary Christians*, but *Romish Catholicks*: Now then, unto this he is to answer; who *now at this day do injoy Tradition*, as he hath stated it? He saith, *the Romish Church*. How doth he prove it? He tells us by the Fathers, if he may trust them: what a strange answer is this? Can any of the Fathers who lived so many hundred years since, give evidence to whom this injoyment is come at this day? Let the Discourser bethink himself: Can any men dead so long ago, testifie who injoy the *Tradition of Christ* in this Age? Yet this is the best return that he giveth us. Can *Irenæus*, *Tertullian*, or *Chrysologus* tell of what Religion *Rome* is at this day? Egregious over-sight! To what purpose is it here for him to tell us, that they say, *Tradition is the Rule?* (however we assert they mean *Scripture-Tradition*, and none else but what is conformed to it,) Do they testifie that the *Romish Church* at this day have this Rule? This must be to prove his intended answer to his Question. No man (we suppose) could have put him an harder *quære* to puzzle him: But the wit of the man hath insnared him: Let him see his folly.

3. We make bold to ask him, seeing he hath not touched one tittle of it; What are those points, that by *Tradition* have been handed down to this Age from the beginning? Let him speak. Is the point of the *Popes Supremacy* over Christian Princes one?

Is

Is that Doctrine *of Christs being Mediator only in his humane nature* another? Is the joyning *of Mans merit unto Christs Righteousness for justification* one of them? Are the monster of *Transubstantiation*, *Decrees for Image-worship*, *Purgatory*, *Laws of Penances*, or indulgences to be placed among them? What an ease had this been to all his Readers to have known the Points that he had meant? But he durst not reveal, what a sink of filthiness by his Tradition, is thus maintained by him, *indefectively* to come down from Christ. Well, fools sometimes seem wise men by holding their peace.

4. We who own the Scripture to be the Rule of Faith, as fenced by God himself, do know that we injoy *Scripture-Tradition from the Apostles*; which the *Trent-Authority* it self durst not deny to be the word of God. And all those points of Faith and no more than are contained therein, we maintain were handed down from the beginning, that is, from Christ unto us. He and all his Traditionary Auxiliaries cannot disprove it.

5. His pretended effect of more Heresies to be in the first 400 years by reason of Renouncers of Tradition at that time, than in any 400 years afterward, is a great untruth in it self; and implieth other iniquities in it: For the Hereticks which were then, did truly *renounce* Apostolical *Tradition* by word and writing; But they who *renounce* the *Tradition of Rome* now, leave only that which is

Apoſtolical from them: yet are they called *Hereticks* by Papiſts: But no great matter is it, ſeeing it is only from *Hereticks* themſelves. And to tell him his own, in the nine laſt Centuries may it appear that more pernicious Errors againſt the true Faith of Chriſt, and impious practices have been hatched and harbored in *Rome*, than were known in all the Centuries before: The comparing of the firſt and laſt times will prove it: And all this is not by *renouncing* but by *following Popiſh Tradition* under that pretence that it was *uninterruptedly deſcended* from Chriſt. We ſhall only make this counter-cloſe with him. No man needs more to doubt of the *Truth of Scriptures-Tradition*, *and the Falſhood of Popiſh Oral Tradition*, than of the Exiſtence *of Mahomet*, or *Julius Cæſar*, what time ſoever they lived.

3. He adds ſome notes to ſtrengthen his Allegations.

1. *That almoſt every citation alledged is of Councils and Fathers ſpeaking directly againſt Hereticks.*

To which we ſhall return theſe notes, 1. That [*Almoſt*] ſaved a *Lye*. 2. That his 7th. *venerable Council*, dealt againſt pernicious Hetericks (without doubt) Such as denied *Images to be* in Churches, and to be worſhipped *and the Reliques* of Saints to be honoured. Were he not an *Image-Worſhipper* himſelf he would be aſhamed to reckon them among *Hereticks*, who maintained the

the second Commandment for Gods spiritual worship, against *Image* or *Imagination-worship of Iehovah* who is a *Spirit*. His *relative* distinction will clear it no more from *Idolatry* than it could the Israelites worshipping of him, who brought them out of the land of *Egypt* in the *Image of a Calf*.

2. *That though some Fathers and Councils speak highly of Scripture as containing all Faith*, &c. *yet it must be mark't, whether it be of Scripture senc't, or to be senc't*, &c.

O most subtle note! It telleth us that some *Fathers* and *Councils* speak *highly of Scripture* as a *Rule of Faith*, or *containing all Faith*: this is granted fully by him, which he spake not out before. 2. Yet he bids us mark whether they assert this of *Scripture*, *senc't or to be senc't*: which is the greatest mark of folly that ever any man put upon himself; to question Councils whether they should maintain the *Scripture* to contain all *Faith*, and yet not *senc't*. Is not Faith, or doctrine to be beleeved the sence of Scripture? Sure he must be sick of that *phrensie*, which he chargeth on others, to suppose such persons, and Assemblies to speak unsenc't *Scriptures*. 3. If he had lived to ask them, by whom these *Scriptures* were senc't? They would have answered, by *God himself*: *They* being his word.

3. He notes again, *That we may observe it frequent in Fathers to force Hereticks to accept the sence of Scripture from those who gave them the letter; and that by Tradition: but never to bend Tradition to Scripture or to say, Universal Tradition is insufficient without it.*

We shall here note also. 1. That the Fathers do force Hereticks to the innate sence of Scripture inspired by God, not affixed by Tradition. 2. That the true Fathers did subject all Tradition unto Scripture to be tried thereby. 3. That universal Tradition with them was both *Scriptural and Oral*; therefore they did not allow *Tradition* by *word* to be true, unless it were evidently apparent in the *written Truth* of God: nor to be sufficient without it.

4 He saith. *It is impossible that the Fathers should hold Scripture thus interpretable the Rule of Faith*; because *the Hereticks, did hold it their Rule*, &c.

We reply, 1. What means *Scripture* (thus Interpretable)? Is it by his Tradition? we verily beleeve, that they never held Scripture so to be the *Rule of Faith*: but only as senced by God. 2. What a sottish reason is added? That the Fathers could not urge *Scripture for Truth*, because the Hereticks did urge it for their *Errors*: *Let the Discourser* answer this: could not *Christ urge Scripture* to maintain *Truth*, because the *Devil* cited it to tempt him? Let him be

dumb

dumb, if he cannot answer this, and we are sure, The case is the same. His vaunts therefore are the froth of folly; *Scripture* hath not lost its edge to cut down his *Popish Tradition*; neither hath it outfaced *Reason* or true *Authority*, which is alone from Heaven. Let him triumph therefore in the ruins of his Cause: His wild shouts will not amaze wise and sober Christians. His last shelter is, that in all this he hath but only explicated his Churches sence; and then he thinks he is safe enough, and shall be secured under her wing. We shall try whether he speak Truth in this; that he may not say any thing was left unconsidered; though it do not much concern us, or the present Cause, whether he have given us herein only the sence of his Church or not, seeing all is contrary to the sence of God.

4. His last work is, to shew that all his discourse is the Sense of his own Romish Church, and that held out in her *famous Representative, the Council of Trent*, not by any private Authors (as the Protestants mode is to affix on her) And their sence he giveth in their several *Sessions* 4th. 5th, 6th, 7th, 13th, 14th, 21st, 22d, 23d, 24th. 25th. His close is, *This is the Faith of blessed Peter*, &c.

Whereunto we say. 1. He seems in all this to be an obedient son to his Trent-Fathers; let him have their blessing if he prove so.

ſo. 2. We are not ſwayed by *Trent* Canons; they are improper *mediums* to uſe unto Proteſtants, they deny all their *Authority* for *Tradition*. 3. He need not put the Proteſtants in that Parentheſis, for they have as much battered his Councils, as private Authors. 4. As to the cloſing acclamation of Trent. *This is the Faith of Bleſſed Peter. This is the Faith of the Fathers. This is the Faith of the Orthodox.* It is as mad an outcry, as that of *Demetrius* and his Rout, *Great is Diana of the Epheſians.* For this *Tradition-Faith* hath got more revenue to the *Roman See*; than ever *Diana's* ſhrines brought in to *Demetrius* and the Crafts-men imploied in that work. This was none of the Apoſtles Faith, but they do bely them.

Act. 19. 28.

Unto this declaration of his Trent-Confeſſion, he adds four notes. 1. *That the Council conſtantly profeſſeth Tradition.* 2. *That it layeth claim perpetually to the uninterruptedneſs of this Tradition.* 3. *That it makes the ſuggeſtion of the Holy Ghoſt efficacious to perpetuate the Tradition of Doctrine; As in their Decree about Juſtification, and their Sacrament of the Euchariſt.* 4. That (though the Council mention the Holy *Scriptures* with *Tradition*) yet *it is very rarely*, and then *Interpreting them by Tradition*; as in that text of the Apoſtle about the anoynting of the ſick for healing, *&c.*

Jam. 5. 14, 15.

To all these notes we reply. 1. Let it be granted that the *Council* constantly professe *Popish Tradition*. Protestants do as constantly deny it. 2. That it *claims* the uninterruptednes of it from Christ; Is it therefore so because those deluded guides do claim it? It hath been proved that the Tradition meerly Popish is *Apostolical* from Christ; therefore could not uninterruptedly descend from him. They are *mad Claimers*. 3. Though they arrogate the suggestion of the Holy Ghost to perpetuate their *Tradition*, yet the spirit of Truth abhorrs it. And specially in those two decrees mentioned, which concern *justification*, *by mingling man's works* with Christs *Righteousnes*; And *Transubstantiation* in their *Sacrament* of the *Eucharist*; no doctrins of Error are more *Characteristical of Antichrist*, than those as they are stated by the *Trent* Decrees.

4. That it doth so *rarely* mention *Scripture*, and when it doth, that it submits it to the *Interpretation of Tradition*; we must charge it as a sin on them if this Testimony be true: For nothing but Scripture is inspired of God, to give forth Doctrins of Faith: But this child may bely his Fathers, in this as in other things afterward, though they use not Scripture so frequently and honestly as they should: which appears in hammering out their *Sacrament of extreme Unction* to fit men for death out of those words which expres only an *extraordinary work of anoynting* with oyl

oyl for that time; and that was only to restore to life and health. And who dares intrude into the office of Christ to make Sacraments, but only the Antichrist? so we give him notes for notes.

Next to these, 1. He objects against himself; *Why then is the Holy Scripure made use of at all by the Council, and that so solemnly?* Nay, *why doth it put Scripture constantly before Tradition.* This difficulty he undertakes to satisfie fully. Though he saith, it is no proper season, *&c.* Why then doth he propose it.

We shall try how he performs this task: He may salve his credit somewhat, if he do it, which is in no little danger to be lost.

1. His scope is to acquit his Trent-Fathers from the *guilt imputable* to them, for making use of *Scripture* and setting it before his *Tradition.* An heavy Crime! which if prov'd, would declare them honester: Or if excused and palliated by him, as done in design to exalt *Tradition*, It must evince them to be a *Pack of Hypocrites*; or himself to bely them. For which his *Mother* should severely censure him.

2. To do this he leads us about the bush to look upon *Aristotle* and *Vitruvius*; whose minds, if we would know, we must make use of *Scientifical discoursing interpreters*, or *a Carpenters practical Art*: And such is, *Tradition Popish* unto the *Scripture* (As he saith) About three Pages he

he ſpends in thoſe Extravagancies.

But in ſhort. 1. We ask, May not an able writing Commentator ſalve difficulties in ſuch Authors, as well as a *Diſcourſer*? *If ſo, Scripture may be opened by Scripture*: neither will he gain one jot by this *Ambuſhment*. His girds againſt the uſe of *Grammar and Criticiſmes* in opening *Scripture* ſo frequently and frivolouſly repeated, may perſwade us he hath little skill in either; And then it is no rare thing for men to ſpeak evil of the things they know not. His *ſtout* that this kind of interpreting *is of ſleight force, and at beſt, good only for Eccleſiaſtical Rhetorick, or Sermons*, ſavours of a *Profane ſpirit*: ſeeing (what ever Papiſts deem) *Sermons* that are ſuch indeed, are convincing diſcoveries of the Goſpel, applied effectually to ſave ſouls: But Papiſts care for no ſuch *Sermons*; They will quickly batter down their Tradition, as *ungrammatical, and a Syntackical*; which is plain *non-ſenſe*. In all this we have no word of anſwer to the objection: only he confidently concludes, Tradition gives us *Chriſts ſence*, that is, the *life of the letter* aſcertain'd to our hand; Againſt which Authority of interpretiug, notwithſtanding the *Grammar and Reaſon* of Scripture, we ſhal urge only his own *Maldonat*: *Vellem ut unam aliquam ex his quæ bones Authores habent ſequi poſſem Interpretationem: ſed fateor præter*

voluntatem

voluntatem meam in novam rationibus majoribus impelli. Maldon. Matthew 19. 11. I would follow (saith he) the Interpretation which good Authors have, but I confess my self to be forced into a new one by greater reasons: *Reason* then, and not *Tradition* swaied with him best, for *Scriptures Interpretation*. Let the Discourser grapple with him: He speaks in this like a man: but we have *Reason*, and the *very Reason of God* helping us to interpret *Scripture*, which indeed giveth life to the *letter*, and moves it as *the body naturally* but *Popish Tradition* moveth it indeed *artificially*, to counterfeit that life which it truly wants.

3. After this diversion, he giveth this answer. The *Council* proceeding upon *Traditionary Interpretation, honors Scriptures Testimony, so as to put it before Tradition: Scripture thus alledged, having the same force, as if the Apostle or Evangelist himself did sit in the Council*, &c. This is the summe of his answer, with some other *loose Appendices* thereunto: Hereabout note.

1. He satisfieth not, the first part, why the Council makes use of the Scripture at all? This perhaps were harder to answer; But we have told you before; They can do nothing as to the *Popish design* without *Scripture cloak and pretence* to cover it and carry it on.

2. He

2. He doth most grosly abuse his Fathers, making them to set their *Tradition* before *Scripture* in the *Authority* of an *Interpreter*: These are their own words; *Omnes libros tam Veteris, quàm Novi Testamenti (cum utriusque unus Deus sit Author) nec non Traditiones ipsas, &c. pari pietatis affectu ac reverentia suscipit ac Veneratur sacro-sancta Synodus.* All the Books both of the *old and new Testament* (*seeing one God is the Author of both*) *as also Traditions themselves, the Holy Synod receiveth and honoureth with an equal Affection of Piety and Reverence.* What *Adversary of the Trent-Council*, can so disingeniously misinterpret their words any way to prefer *Tradition* before *Scripture* when they say expresly, they do *equally receive and honour them?* What a degenerate son then is the Discourser thus to abuse them? for he is wholly silent of the work of this Session. *Conc. Trid. Sess. 2da An. 1546.*

3. What *simple Hypocrites* doth he make his *Fathers*, that they should set *Scripture* before *Tradition* in word, and yet make it lacky after it indeed; For *Tradition* is made *the life, and Scripture* only the *carcase*, or *dead letter.* How doth he make this council a very Cheat? Notwithstanding we think better of their words; and beleeve if they were surviving, they would look upon this man as an unlucky Son, born out of due time, so to bewray them and betray their cause, as if it were an *Hypocritical design.*

1. VVe

1. VVe muſt carefully and candidly review his words and ſee how his reaſon abetts his anſwer: No wonder ſaith he, the *Council honors Scripture Teſtimony*, ſo as to put it before *Tradition*, they keeping to *Traditionary Interpretation*. *For Scripture thus alledged and ſecur d hath the ſame force as if the Evangeliſt or Apoſtle himſelf ſtould ſit in the Council, and by living voice declare his own ſence in the matter*: *To whom what Reverence* (we ſuppoſe he meant) however the *Typographer* hath abuſed him to put in *Deference* for it, *the* Council *would have given is obvious to imagine.* Here we animadverr.

1. Expreſly he ſaith, *Scripture* ſence by *Tradition* hath the ſame force as an *Evangeliſt* ſitting in Council. So then, *Tradition* ſupplieth the place of an *Apoſtle* or *Evangelist*: *Scripture* is the matter under debate, what ſence it ſhall bear; The Council hereupon giveth Reverence to *Tradition* as to its preſident Apoſtolical. Is not this handſomely contrived? VVho durſt put *Tradition Popiſh* into the room of an *Evangeliſt* or *Apoſtle*, but Antichriſtian Impudence.

2. This *Apoſtle Tradition* giving ſence to *Scripture* the Council receiveth it, and for recompence to this diminution, doth in order of words ſet the *Scripture* before *Tradition*: And for this is the Diſcourſer proclaims *the Proteſtants* may ſee, what high eſteem their *Church* giveth to *Gods word*: very high indeed! to take away its life by their Tradition; and

then

then give it a *mock Primacy* in naming it first. Even such as the Ruffian Souldiers vouchsafed to the Lord himself, they put him on a purple Robe and Crown of Thorns; and then cry, *Hail King of the Jews*, and so crucifie him. Such Honour gives the *Trent-Council* to Scriptures, unless their Assertor do belye them: If he do, *vapulet ille*.

3. Suppose an Apostle himself did sit in *Council* as divers did in that of *Jerusalem*, to determine the matter about Circumcision: we find the Apostle *James* urging a *Scripture-Promise* out of the Prophet *Amos* for inlarging Gods Church among the Gentiles, without imposing on them the Legal Ordinances: Did that *Apostle* arrogate to himself to give *life* to that *Scripture*, or set his determination above it? Did he not submit his judgment to it? Would it not incur the danger of that *Anathema*, by an *Apostle*, as much as by an *Angel*, to impose a sence upon Gods *Scripture* more than simply his own. Yet thus this *Disputer* calleth in his Council to him to intrude on Gods *Scripture* their *Tradition-sence*, which makes it none of *Gods Word* indeed, and then read *Scripture* before *Tradition* as a great point of honour done unto it. In sum his answer is full of mockery and derision of the *holy Scripture*, and of the God of it, for if it be his word (as the *Trent* Confession acknowledgeth) He himself must spirit it, and put that life into it, by which he doth regenerate souls, to attribute this

Act. 15, 13, &c. Amo 9. 11. Gal. 1. 8.

then to *Tradition*, to give life to *Scripture*, which is *Gods word* can no more truly be said, than that *Tradition* giveth *God his Being*; for *God* and his *word* are *reciprocally* related, and must both be honoured or abused togegether. And as he liveth will he avenge these blasphemies against his revealed Truth, as against himself.

It is but vain repetition for the Discourser to tell us, That they *sleight and undervalue only Scriptures-letter* as used *to hammer out a Faith by wordish skills*; He hath been told the sence of Scripture is inspired, and innate, wherein are fixed the Principles of faith, not upon any words of men: But this sence cuts the sinews of the *Romish Faith*; which makes the man and his Assistants to storm, and bespatter it as the *Issue of Wordish skills*, and cause of a *Bedlam of new Sects in England*. Let them go on so to reproach *Gods word*; Ignorance of the Scripture breeds error and not the true knowledge of it, which guides to *Truth and Life*. They have *Bedlams enough of Sects and Orders* in the *Romish Territories*, which are the proper *Off-spring* of their *Tradition*, their labour might be better spent in curing them which they never mean to do: *for Spiritual madness is the health of Popish Religion*.

He closeth with a *Sarcastical Reflexion* on a mighty *Man of talk*, who might say, This is an *excellent way to bring all into their Churches hands*. If ever there can be a more

mighty

mighty man of talk, and leſſe of reaſon than this *Diſcourſer*, let the brand lye upon him; but this ſurely he will not deny, that his deſign by theſe diſcourſes is to perſwade wits to *viſit Rome*, and bewitch them with his *Tradition*. This ſucceſs would rejoyce him more than to hear his Books were ſo much ſought after. But God hath given forth that light, which will fruſtrate his deſign. Yet he concludes confidently, *till letter and ſence of Scripture can be proved knowable, as to build faith on by any other way than this of Tradition, (that is Popiſh) he cannot hinder his Inferences, neither will any be ever able to confute his diſcourſe.* We ſhall ſhut up too with this ſhort reply. 1. *Tradition* meerly *Popiſh* hath been proved *Apoſtatical* from Chriſt, therefore *defective* enough. 2. The letter and ſence of Scripture have been made knowable for faith, to build on, primarily from heaven, ſecondarily by *Tradition Scriptural* as well as oral, more faithful than any from *Rome*. 3. *His Inferences* therefore vaniſh whether he hinder them or not; And if after all this, his *Diſcourſe* be not confuted, we leave it to the judicious and impartial Reader to judge.

Hitherto he hath ſhewed his ſtrength for ſupport of the Indefectiveneſs of *Popiſh Tradition* from Chriſt, (which he may conceive impregnable) but wiſe men ſee to be but a *Paper-fortification*, that can endure no ſolid rational charge againſt it. Yet before he

ends he hath something to say *for himself*, for his *Romish Catholicks* and to the *Protestants*.

1. *For himself, he saith, his discourses are the very sense of the Romish Church in its Representative, the* Trent *Council.*

Whether it be so or not it matters not much with us, as to the Cause; But he speaks not true, for his *doctrin, and the Trent-decree* do vastly differ in the terms, however he being born so long after his Fathers were dead, undertakes an hard task to express their minds so farr dissonant unto their words. Let him answer it to his Superiors.

2. *His Romish Catholicks* he vindicates and commends for *adhering fast to the Rule of Tradition when the Breach* (as he calleth it) *was in England*; And *hereby the most vulgar of them is ascertain'd that they are in the truth by common sense, and Gods goodness requireth no more of them*, but so to receive *their Tradition*, which is a *certain* means to *judge, they should be Papists and not Protestants*, &c.

1. That *Romish Catholicks* did adhere at that time unto *Popish-Tradition* we grant, but that they received *Tradition Indefective from Christ* we deny. 2. That God requireth no more of those souls, than to receive *Popish Tradition* in order to their salvation, is both *Blasphemy against the Lord*, who commands all to search the Scriptures, that therein they may find Christ their life; and *horrid cruelty*

to

to thoſe poor ſouls ſo to perſwade them to perſiſt in the way of perdition. O poor ſheep committed unto ſuch Paſtors! whoſe doctrin is, *Ignorance to be the mother of Devotion*, which God teacheth to be the *high way to deſtruction*.

3. He chargeth the Proteſtants. 1. To be *Innovators*, *and Renouncers of Tradition*. 2. *To be Perſecutors of Romiſh Catholicks*, *at that time adhering to it*. 3. *That they choſe a new Rule*, *Scripture privately interpreted*. 4. *That hereby they are cut off from the Root of Faith*, *and from the Church*: *The guilt of which Fact neither Humane Authority*, &c.

For defenſe, we ſay, 1. That Proteſtants in the year 1559. and many years before, did not renounce that *Tradition Scriptural and Oral*, which did *truly and indefectively* deſcend from Chriſt; neither were they *Innovators* of that Faith: But they renounced *Popiſh Tradition* as being of a long time *Apoſtatical from Chriſt*; and reſtored the uſe of *Scriptures*, and preached the *Everlaſting Goſpel* from thence to the throwing down of the *Romiſh Babel*, which was a glorious work of God; and hath been carried on ſucceſsfully by the *Men of God* to this day; For which they will be had in everlaſting remembrance.

2. As for perſecution for that cauſe, of *holding Tradition*, we find none, If for maintaining the *Popes Supremacy* againſt

their own *natural Soveraign*, or other traiterous Attempts any ſuffered, this was farre from being *perſecuted* for *Religion*.

3. That Proteſtants then choſe *Scripture privately interpreted*, as a *new Rule of Faith*, is a ſlander caſt upon them by this *Diſcourſer* and his *Adherents*: They [hold] Scripture as inſpired and ſenced by God only, which is no private Reſolution of Mans: neither do they ſee vanity in it, but the very ſaving Truth of God, in Chriſts Jeſus thereby conveighed wherein they rejoyce and will rejoyce.

4. That hereby Proteſtants are cut off from the Root of Faith, or the Body of the Church, which is Chriſts, is an *Empty Fable*; the *Diſputer* may tell his ſimple Papiſts ſo, but *Scriptures Aſſertors* know, they have hereby more *rooting in Chriſt*, and ſo more real Communion with his *Body*, the *Church*, being ſeparated from that *Adultereſs of Rome*. And as for any guilt of this fact, they need no *Humane Authority*, *Multitude*, *Proſperity*, *Continuance*, *nor yet any Voluminous wordiſh Excuſes to Efface it*, (However their Apology heretofore given out is unanſwerable by any Jeſuitical Accuſer) But God himſelf doth juſtifie them by his own Call; *Come out of her, my People, that ye be not Partakers of her ſins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.* This voice they obeyed and the *Lord became their God*; and he hath owned

Revel. 18. 4.

owned, and doth own this Separation from that *Idolatress* at this day. O that this voice might be heard in the ears of them who yet are sitting in the Regions of darkness, and valley of the shadow of death under Romish Tyranny; that poor souls might flie from *Traditions Snares* and pits made to destroy them: For they, who observe lying vanities, forsake their own mercy. Jam. 2. 8.

Behold the End of this Sure-Footing.

FINIS.